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This study examines the economic culture of Virginia from the end of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth. The study employs five individuals who operated in an entrepreneurial capacity as case studies to reveal the complexity of the business climate in Virginia. Using these individuals as examples I argue that an entrepreneurial mindset influenced the growth of transatlantic commerce in Virginia. At the same time entrepreneurial activity aided in the solidification of anglicized institutions in the colonies, allowing for deepening assertions of empire in the Chesapeake and backcountry regions. However, the transition was never an organized progression but, rather, a complicated web of endeavors relying on legitimate and illegitimate business networks and practices. The case studies represented in this work demonstrate the types of business activities undertaken by settlers and planters as they tested the exploitable resources and the imperial authority of the colony. It also focuses on a place and time where the growth of plantation slavery influenced motivations and actions of colonists. The work adds to previous histories of Virginia, Atlantic, and economic history by offering analysis of the social environment and cultural motivations of the period through the examination of business-motivated individuals. These individuals were integral parts of a larger culture of empire that asserted its power into North America in the eighteenth century.

AGENTS OF EMPIRE: ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND THE TRANSFORMATION
OF VIRGINIA, 1688-1750

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Before they even established new and busy societies, colonizers denoted some people as entrepreneurial stewards of the land.¹

Nancy Isenberg

Students of American history might ask, “do we really need another study about colonial Virginia?” The initial answer to that question might easily be “no.” Since its founding authors have produced a library’s worth of scholarship dedicated to investigating Britain’s first successful American colony, examining the subject with a myriad of approaches, agendas, and insight, so that one might feel that centuries of study have fully exhausted any potential for new understanding of Virginia’s place in colonial history. An accelerated attention to Virginia in the last half of the twentieth century seemed to leave few stones unturned in terms of the political, cultural, economic, and environmental development of the colony. Scholars, employing the quantitative and analytical tools of social, economic, and intellectual history completed a portrait of the colony from its inception through the Revolution. As a result, the effort to reveal the complexity of Virginia’s development appears complete

Because of this complexity, the following study will answer the above question with, “yes, we need another study about colonial Virginia, and many more.” It is a

¹ Nancy Isenberg, *White Trash: The 400-Year Old Untold History of Class in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2016) 19.

study of Virginia's economic culture in the colonial era, with particular focus on entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship was both a cause and a product of Virginia's economic transformation, and it is the purpose of this study to examine diverse modes of entrepreneurial activity that significantly changed Virginia's economic environment during these decisive decades of the colonial period. I specifically focus on entrepreneurial activity from the end of England's Glorious Revolution (1688) to the middle of the eighteenth century. The study will support the claim that Virginia, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, experience a period of economic transition that relied on and was influenced by the participation of entrepreneurs.

The use of entrepreneurship as a tool with which to study Virginia's economic culture allows for two modes of interpretation to support my claim. First, studying entrepreneurial activity permits a substantial understanding of the type of business transactions existing in the Virginia-Atlantic world. This allows a practical study of the nature and processes of business in the colonial era as well as an understanding of what type of venture succeeded, which did not, and why. It also leads to better understanding of what type of individuals became economic actors in Virginia, what their background was, what kind of external financial support they experienced, and how connected they were within the Atlantic world of exchange. This, in turn, reveals a portrait of Virginia's economic climate through the decades of study, demonstrating factors that worked in favor or against potential businessmen and the adaptive changes that occurred in business practices throughout the roughly seventy-five years that this study covers.

Secondly, using entrepreneurship as an interpretive tool allows for an analytical lens from which to examine the motivations and mentalities of entrepreneurial Virginians. The term entrepreneur came to full use as an analytical tool in the nineteenth century, and this study employs definitions of entrepreneurship to analyze motivating factors within the colonial sphere that prompted entrepreneurs to take risks, create innovations, and enjoy profits (although often these profits were slow in coming, and sometimes they never came at all). This perspective reveals a significant amount of anxiety in Virginia's business culture, caused by the volatility of the Atlantic tobacco market and a cultural identity that worked to assert its political and economic independence with one hand while strengthening hereditary and economic ties to Britain with the other. Analyzing the period through the scope of entrepreneurial activity permits a picture to emerge of a colony in search of an economic identity that worked to simultaneously strengthen bonds within the English Atlantic and create a distinctive, competitive, and more cohesive colonial society. By using this analytical tool I reveal four overriding points: 1) That during the period of study Virginia's culture and economy transformed. 2) Entrepreneurs are essential to this transformation. 3) Social and economic transatlantic connections are vital to this process. 4) Entrepreneurs demonstrate a larger colonial social development of balancing British and colonial identities. To permit a practical examination of entrepreneurship in the period of study I use five case studies, men who operated business ventures of varying capacities from the end of the seventeenth century to 1750. The individual entrepreneurs I have chosen to study all demonstrated, either directly or indirectly, significant interests in commercial ventures in

colonial Virginia during their lifetimes. The activity of these subjects and individuals like them, although often directly related to the escalating plantation culture, influenced an increasingly dynamic and complex economic culture, one that strengthened ties between its sister colonies, its Atlantic commercial partners, and the British crown. At the same time, entrepreneurship arose as a response to an economic system that relied increasingly upon African slaves for labor. The combination of desire to diversify away from tobacco as an unreliable cash crop and the change from indentured servants to slave labor motivated economic actors in the colony to employ innovation and careful planning in the hopes of realizing profits in a shifting cultural and political landscape. Entrepreneurial activity arose from Virginia's attempts to remain a viable economic component of the British empire and, simultaneously, help to reinforce the institutions that would solidify the colony as the slave-planter society it would eventually become.² The individuals I have studied for this project all react and make decisions based on these transitions. They are particularly appropriate because their careers reveal economic activity and motivation on an individual level within the colonial commercial milieu demonstrating some of the intricacies of the trans-Atlantic networks of exchange.

² For the subject of Virginia and slavery see Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), Anthony S. Parent, *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), Allan Kulikoff, *Tobacco and Slaves: The Development of Southern Cultures in the Chesapeake, 1680-1800* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), Lorena S. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1997), Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1975), Kathleen M. Brown *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, & Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

The years between England's Glorious Revolution and the French Indian War offer a particularly dynamic period for study regarding colonial Virginia. Although there has been extensive scholarly focus on the foundation period of the early seventeenth century as well as the years leading up to the Revolutionary War, the several decades of social and economic development in the first half of the eighteenth century appear somewhat overshadowed. Existing scholarship provides a sketch of a colony in transition during this time, but, compared to the previously mentioned periods that bookend colonial Virginian history, the first half of the eighteenth century offers a less-explored era of cultural, political, and economic change.³

Economic diversity and ingenuity, as it evolved in Virginia in the eighteenth century, transcended class, but the entrepreneurs this study focuses on employed a particular connection to the wider world of Atlantic exchanges based on their elite or semi-elite statuses. A few historians of the twentieth century worked to present the changes that occurred in Virginia's economy as it transitioned into the eighteenth century. Lois Green Carr and Lorena Walsh's research analyzed the process of diversification occupational practices underwent as commerce became, at least in part, less dependent on imported European goods. On plantations, in towns, and in emerging urban centers, eighteenth-century British colonial artisans produced goods domestically

³ For histories that focus on early eighteenth century Virginia see Warren M. Billings, John E. Selby, and Thad Tate, eds., *Colonial Virginia: A History* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), Robert E. Brown, Katherine B. Brown, *Virginia 1705-1786: Democracy or Aristocracy?* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1964); Kevin Hardwick, Warren Hofstra, eds., *Virginia Reconsidered: New Histories of the Old Dominion Cavaliers* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 2003); Richard L. Moore, *Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960).

to supply a growing array of community needs. In Virginia this meant a shift from commercial goods imported with credit earned primarily from tobacco to locally or regionally produced goods. As a result, colonies like Virginia began to evolve a self-sufficiency that relied on regional and cultural exchanges. As Carr and Walsh state, the colony's elite spurred the first efforts toward this type of commercial domestication, as planters, coastal merchants, and colonial officials worked to capitalize off of the potential of the colony's natural resources and growing labor pool. Carr and Walsh's work allows an overview of the rising diversity of commercial activities in the colony, presenting the backdrop for my assertions about entrepreneurship. In this sense the case studies presented here add to the scholarship Carr and Walsh laid the foundation for by acting as historical and methodological conduits between local means of economic expansion and the development of the British Empire in North America.⁴

A model for this approach is April Lee Hatfield's *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century*. Focusing on the seventeenth century Chesapeake, Hatfield produced a detailed portrait of commercial life in Virginia. Her work brings vibrancy to the Virginia colonial narrative by identifying the intricate networks used by English and Indian traders for the exchange and manufacture of goods in and out of the

⁴ Lois Green Carr and Lorena S. Walsh, "Economic Diversification and Labor Organization in the Chesapeake, 1650-1820," in Stephen Innes, ed., *Work and Labor in Early America* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1988) 145-146. See also Carr, "Diversification in the Colonial Chesapeake: Somerset County Maryland, in Comparative Perspective," and Walsh, "Community Networks in the Early Chesapeake," in Lois Green Carr, Philip d. Morgan, and Jean B. Russo, eds., *Colonial Chesapeake Society* (Chapel Hill, The University of North Carolina Press).

colony.⁵ Hatfield's efforts reinforced the scholarship by Richard Sheridan that emphasized the need to focus on internal trade as it related to the spread of empire, particularly the effect it produced on American Indian culture and exchange. If colonists were experiencing a self-sufficient commercial evolution in the early eighteenth century, the opposite could be said of Indians who became increasingly dependent on the commodity of furs as a way into the Atlantic avenue of exchange. Sheridan and Hatfield emphasize this growing bond between the Chesapeake, the interior of the colony, and its indigenous people. Chapter Three of this study, focusing on Indian trader and planter-entrepreneur William Byrd, adds to this narrative, continuing Hatfield's work on interior exchanges but providing a link from a Chesapeake dominated era to a period shifting some focus onto the potential of the backcountry.⁶

David Hackett Fischer also examined Virginia in the late seventeenth century, particularly through the lives of those who immigrated from southern England. While his focus is less on economic culture his assertions about the continuity and transformation of folkways in the colony reinforce my assertion of Virginian identity being intrinsically tied to the mother country, affecting the exchange of goods and services as a result.⁷ This identification with their Anglican heritage would continue into the eighteenth century. My study concentrates on a gap in the scholarship that ends with Hatfield's and Fischer's

⁵ April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2004).

⁶ Richard B. Sheridan, "The Domestic Economy," in Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole eds., *Colonial British America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984) 74, 75-77.

⁷ David Hackett Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

work and begins again with works such as Rhys Isaac's *The Transformation of Virginia: 1740-1790*. Isaac traces the decline in Virginia's planter elite due to evangelical Christianity and cosmopolitanism which brought new attitudes of individuality and spirituality to the growing population, informed in no small part by entrepreneurial Atlantic exchanges in the previous decades. The decades leading up to Isaac's period of study witnessed the solidification of the economy which would inform transformations in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Entrepreneurs sought opportunities in this environment, propelling their economically active culture into the prerevolutionary period of colonial Virginia.⁸

Entrepreneurship: Definitions and Applications

The term entrepreneur as it relates to colonial British North America is subject to varying interpretations. The expression, in its usage during the Middle Ages, simply meant one who commences and finishes a project. The modern use of the word comes from the French verb *entreprendre*, to undertake, and was first used in an economic context in the eighteenth century by Irish-French economist/philosopher Richard Cantillon (1680-1734). Cantillon considered anyone who bore risk to their own accounts through trading an entrepreneur. For example, water carriers that carried water from the Seine to sell to outlying neighborhoods for a profit would qualify for the classification. Cantillon's definition required the presence of risk and a residual rather than a contractual

⁸ Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia, 1740-1790* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983).

income, the latter being the condition of hired men.⁹ Almost a century later economist Jean Baptiste Say (1767-1832), defined an entrepreneur as an individual who incorporates three means of production: capital, labor, and land to yield a product. The income he receives from the sale of the product is then returned to the three means of production in form of rent on land, wages for labor, and interest on capital loans. Anything left over is profit. Using this process, the entrepreneur moves economic resources from a low area of productivity to one of higher productivity and yield. Unlike Cantillon, Say emphasized planning, not risk, as the most important element in entrepreneurial activity, revealing the entrepreneur as an individual who spends much of his or her time analyzing the intricacies of the marketplace and its potential. The entrepreneur then makes informed decisions to minimize risk and maximize profit. While risk is an inevitability in entrepreneurial practices it can, according to Say, be negated by careful interpretations of the market.

Twentieth-century economists emphasized another factor in entrepreneurship, innovation. Say alluded to the process of innovation with his model of entrepreneurs pushing productivity towards higher points of yield through innovative planning.¹⁰ In the 1930s Austrian American economist Joseph Alois Schumpeter (1883-1950) called

⁹ Anthony Brewer, *Richard Cantillon: Pioneer of Economic Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1992) 51. See also: Anthony E. Murphey, *Richard Cantillon: Entrepreneur and Economist* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); Richard Cantillon, *Essay on the nature of Commerce in General*, Anthony Brewer ed. (New York: Transaction Press, 2001); Joseph J. Spengler, "Richard Cantillon: First of the Moderns," *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 62, No. 4, August 1954, 281-295.

¹⁰ Jean Baptiste Say, *A Treatise on Political Economy, or the Production, Distribution* (New York, Forgotten Books, 2004); Evelyn L. Forget, *The Social Economics of Jean Baptiste Say: Markets and Virtue* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Richard Whatmore, *Republicanism and the French Revolution: An Intellectual History of Jean Baptiste Say's Political Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

entrepreneurs “wild spirits” and credited them for a nation’s innovations in economic and technological fields. Schumpeter coined the phrase “entrepreneurial spirit” in which economic actors either invent new ways of doing old things or do things that have never been done before.¹¹

Entrepreneurial activity in eighteenth century British North America exhibited all four of the qualities that define the entrepreneur in the modern world: risk, profit, planning, and innovation. Scholars of early American economics view these undertakings as a primary component in the development of colonial and transatlantic commerce. Stuart Bruchey recognized the judicious and measured calculation that accompanied entrepreneurial planning and business relations. These relationships were dependent on a number of social connections throughout the colony and within the mother country, so that successful entrepreneurship and high social standing were rarely mutually exclusive.¹² Joyce Chaplin, studying entrepreneurship in South Carolina, highlighted the innovation caused by the amassing of wealth and sustained development, fed by slave

¹¹ Peter Drucker, *Innovation and Management* (New York: Harper Business, 1985, 2006); Herbert Kisch, “Joseph Alois Schumpeter,” *Journal of Economic Issues*, Vol. 13, No. 1, March 1979. Michael I. Stevenson, *Joseph Alois Schumpeter: A Bibliography, 1905-1984* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1985); Wolfgang F. Stolper, *Joseph Alois Schumpeter: The Public Life of a Private Man* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Arthur Smithies, “Memorial: Joseph Alois Schumpeter 1883-1950,” *The American Economic Review* Vol. 40, No. 4, September, 1950, 628-648.

¹² Stuart Bruchey, “Success and Failure Factors: American Merchants in Foreign Trade in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries,” *Business History Review* 32 (1958): 272-292. See also Rudlof Braun “The Rise of a Rural Class of Industrial Entrepreneurs,” *Journal of World History* 10 (1967): 551-66; Thomas M Doerflinger, *A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1986); Roland L. Lewis, *Coal, Iron, Slaves: Industrial Slavery in Maryland and Virginia, 1715-1865* (Westport, Conn., Greenwood Press, 1979).

labor, that allowed a variety of economic activities.¹³ Regarding the Chesapeake, George Washington often stands as an example of the planter entrepreneur, diversifying his income and innovating planter techniques to produce more yield and profit. Although colonial businessmen would not have referred to themselves as entrepreneurs, most nevertheless had an understanding of the concepts that set their earnings apart from wage and/or contract income.¹⁴ A planter who undertook a venture that involved risk, profit, planning, and innovation would more likely refer to himself as an *adventurer* or an *undertaker*. The eighteenth century definition of these two terms usually implied the necessity of qualities we now attach to the term entrepreneur.¹⁵

Sven Beckert emphasizes entrepreneurial activity in the global rise of capitalism whose origins he traces to the sixteenth century and which he terms war capitalism. War capitalism, Beckert asserts, was a system that grew out of the circumstances of slavery and the slave-trade, the trade in arms, and assertions of sovereign authority that created new trends in consumption and trade practices. Predating industrialism, it relied on agricultural labor and land acquisition, usually through violent means. Slavery, rather than wage labor, defined its mode of production. Instead of labor contracts, trade agreements, and laws, war capitalism often depended on the “unrestrained actions of private individuals.” Beckert points out that this early phase of capitalist expansion is

¹³ Joyce Chaplin, *An Anxious Pursuit: Agricultural Innovation and Modernity in the lower South, 1730-1815* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 10-11.

¹⁴ Mansel Blackford and K. Austin Kerr, *Business Enterprise in American History*, 3rd ed. (Boston: Wadsworth Publishing, 1993) 29-32.

¹⁵ Laura Croghan Kamoie, *Irons in the Fire: The Business History of the Tayloe Family and Virginia's Gentry, 1700-1860* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007) 4-5.

often overlooked even though its manifestation lasted in some places into the nineteenth century. The individuals presented in this study reflect not only the expansion of empire but the simultaneous employment of the type of capitalism Beckert describes. The five men I write about all represent in some way a manifestation of war capitalism from piratical exploitation, plantation slavery, backcountry forts, Anglo-centric promotional literature, to the institutional legitimizing of slavery in newspaper advertisements.¹⁶

Slavery, Virginia Entrepreneurship, and the British Atlantic World

Since its founding Virginia's English investors viewed the colony as a potential profit generating prospect. But profits did not come readily in the first decades of the colony's establishment and the London Virginia Company abandoned it and its settlers in 1622, leaving a hardened group of mostly subsistence farmers who came to be known as planters. The ready market for a new export commodity transformed the subsistence culture to one that could bring considerable profits by growing tobacco, a development that created an economic interdependence between the colony and Europe. The possibility of profiting in the New World by growing tobacco and developing the colony lured settlers and laborers to Virginia between 1630 and the 1670s. The motives extended beyond a new life in a world that offered more possibilities than one might have in England. As Robert Wintour, an immigrant from Gloucester, England explained, the options for a life of honor, pleasure, and most significantly, profit, motivated settlers to immigrate to the Chesapeake. The advancement of the empire's Christianity-based

¹⁶ Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Books, 2014)xv-xvi.

mission of influence, especially with the native population, represented the honor part of the equation, the pleasure lay in owning and living off your own track of land. Profit would come not only from the export of tobacco but other food crops and the import of indentured servants.¹⁷ These years witnessed the growth of Virginia based on the tobacco economy and an increase in its population, motivated by the kind of the expectations Wintour expressed.

As April Lee Hatfield argues, evolving economic conditions at the end of the seventeenth century and beginning of the eighteenth transformed Virginia significantly. Her work, focusing on Atlantic connections between Europe, British colonies, and Virginia in the seventeenth century identifies intercolonial relationships that depended on the goals of the founders of the colony. The desire to compete with Spain for American resources allowed for a vibrant maritime milieu to develop in the Chesapeake, connected to the interior and the Atlantic seaboard by trade routes that were often exploited from ancient Indian paths. Hatfield asserts that eventually the Chesapeake transatlantic and transcolonial maritime community declined due to factors such as shorter docking times and faster turnaround on shipping which kept English seamen from mingling with the colony's residents. Increased migration to the backcountry also played a part in this decline, as did strengthening ties with the transatlantic slave trade which diverted attention from seventeenth century Atlantic mercantilism toward trade based on African

¹⁷ Wintour's assessment comes from Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor, Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010) 2-3. Walsh obtained the account from John D. Krugler, ed., *To Live Like Princes: A Short Treatise Sett Downe in a Letter Written by R.W. to His Worthy Friend C.J.R. concerning the Plantation Now Erecting under the Right Honorable Lord Baltemore in Maryland...* (Baltimore, 1976), 27-37.

bondage. These shifting networks of Atlantic connections set a stage for the continuation of the planters' rise to power in the colony and prepared the region for the arrival of a new variety of economic opportunists.¹⁸

From the 1680s on Virginia's footing within the Atlantic and British colonial worlds, came to depend increasingly on the proliferation of slavery. As such, slavery spread to permeate every aspect of colonial Virginia by the middle of the eighteenth century, creating a market for human laborers that fed and reinforced entrepreneurial activity. Slavery allowed Virginians in the first half of the eighteenth century to increase the colony's output. One of the key differences between slavery and the former means of labor, indentured servitude, is that the planter could extract as much labor as he wanted from the slave for an indefinite amount of time. In addition, he could set limits on the expenses for housing, clothing, and feeding his slaves. Slaves would work at tasks specifically chosen by their masters apart from tobacco, planting grains, orchards and raising livestock.¹⁹ The planter could also require slave women and young children to work in the fields at jobs the wives and children of servants would rarely be asked to do. The pool of labor could grow as slave women could rear children while still working in tobacco cultivation.

Most ominously, slaves became the property of the master, allowing for a marketable investment with which to gain profits. This condition prompted Virginia's

¹⁸Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia*, 227-228.

¹⁹ Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998) 5.

ruling body to enact laws that would protect the property rights of slaveowners and reinforce stiff punishments for infractions by slaves. Beginning in 1661 the colony began to include statutes that dealt with infractions involving slaves and by 1669 the burgesses passed an act which exempted a master from penalties for excessive punishments toward slaves. Meant to serve as an incentive to slaves who had little motivation to work other than enforcement of their bondage by violent means, the acts were also designed to reinforce a separate society by enacting strong consequences for interracial coupling. The laws became more draconian by the first decade of the eighteenth century, culminating in the slave codes of 1705, allowing the maiming of slaves not only to protect the master from future infraction but to protect what had now become the primary institution of labor in the colony.²⁰

The growing slave/plantation culture combined with a mounting insecurity, especially in the elite classes, about Virginian identity within the British Atlantic world. Jack P. Greene described the foundation by the first two generations as building the basis for the cultural and economic expansion of Virginia's colonial culture. His work asserts that the growing complexity of life in colonial Virginia began more and more to resemble British metropolitan life. John Shelby augments this assessment by pointing to the emergence of the planter elite as government officials as a political body that could act in the interest of the colony and on behalf of the crown. Although most Virginia creoles rarely or never visited Great Britain, a large part of them, especially the planter class,

²⁰ Morgan, *American Freedom*, 311-313. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint*, 15. See also Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives*, 108-109, 133-136.

came to identify themselves as an extension of English social and political society. This took place in no small part due to the emergence of the planter elite as administrators of the colony and the replacement of white indentured servants with African slaves in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. As Greene points out, the goal of earlier generations stemmed on making relatively quick fortunes from the commodities of the colony and returning to England with the profits. From the third generation onward, the consolidation of white (predominantly male) interests created a power structure that allowed for the growth of the colony in the long term from the use of slave labor and the export of tobacco as the lynchpins of what Greene calls Virginia's "social elaboration."²¹

This is not to suggest that Virginia experienced a steady economic boom during the decades covered in this study. After experiencing progressively increasing revenues from tobacco exports through the seventeenth century, tobacco profits stagnated from 1680 to around the third decade of the eighteenth century. Stagnating income in Europe, Chesapeake tobacco's largest market, prompted a decline in demand for luxury items, including tobacco. As a result Chesapeake planters attempted to raise other marketable crops such as grains, corn, and wheat, and find other occupational pursuits which could sustain them during tobacco's downturn. Farmers in the lower Eastern Shore region of

²¹ Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988) 81. Greene juxtaposes his developmental model against the declension model he uses for New England claiming, "To contemporary puritan settlers, the coherent social and cultural order they had so carefully fabricated during the first generation of settlement seemed to be falling apart, and they interpreted this development, in all of its manifestations, as evidence of social and moral declension." Greene, *Pursuits*, 55. For more on the commercial development in New England colonies Phyllis Whitman Hunter see *Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World: Massachusetts Merchants, 1670-1780* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001) and Perry Miller *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953).

Maryland and Virginia began diversifying their crops, sending both tobacco and grains overseas. Many farmers resisted the impulse to create export crops and relied on subsistence farming to support their families. They migrated west to the Piedmont counties as well. As Allan Kulikoff points out, the need to find a sustainable living combined with rising populations in the Tidewater region prompted the sons and daughters of Chesapeake planters and farmers to relocate to the abundance of the frontier to improve their condition. These settlers brought slaves with them.²²

Despite the downturn in tobacco exports, Virginia, by the end of the seventeenth century was still an attractive proposition for Englishmen with a little capital to invest. Part of this attraction had to do with the transition to slave labor. Tobacco required less land than sugar. An investment of £300-£400 could purchase more than enough land to efficiently start growing tobacco, with funds left over for slaves. Tobacco planting also required less labor, when 10 laborers could produce 20,000 pound of tobacco a year. Also, the occupation potentially offered a prestigious status to successful planters. Virginia represented a less competitive playing field for Englishmen seeking the combination of wealth and influence. A well-planned marriage to a widow of an established planter could ensure financial, social, and political success to immigrants who came, as in the case of William Byrd, under the sponsorship of a successful uncle or cousin. This system flourished through the economic alliances and activities of the

²² Kulikoff, Allan. "The Colonial Chesapeake: Seedbed of Antebellum Southern Culture?" *The Journal of Southern History* 45, no. 4 (1979): 528; "The Economic Growth of the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake Colonies." *The Journal of Economic History* 39, no. 1 (1979): 275-88. Walsh, *Motives*, 5. See also, "Summing the Parts: Implications for Estimating Chesapeake Output in Income Subregionally," *WMQ*, 3d Ser., LVI (1999), 53-94.

planter immigrants and established Virginia colonists, and was reinforced by the “hansom, gentile and sure subsistence,” afforded by slavery.²³

The trajectory toward a slave society developed as the culture of elite planters solidified. As Emory G. Evans reveals, by 1680 Virginia’s “first twenty-one families,” wealthy descendants of English colonists settled mostly along the James River, were established and positioned to succeed despite the poor performance of tobacco in subsequent decades. This consolidation of wealth came in no small part because of planters entrepreneurial activity. The most successful occupied themselves with mercantilism as well as planting, exporting and trading not only considerable amounts of tobacco, but furs, wheat, and usable items such as nails, and pipe staves. William Fitzhugh recorded operations on his plantation that included a dairy, dovecote, herds of cattle, sheep, and hogs and a 100-square foot garden. He operated stores as well, selling cotton cloth, and linens, farm implements, thread, and imported cheese. He also operated a consignment business for those who wanted to export through his connections. Planters also hoped to strike mineral wealth through their activities, finding some potential in iron ore and surveying their land and the backcountry for precious metals.²⁴

²³ Morgan, *American Slavery*, 303-304. The quote, by planter William Fitzhugh comes from Richard B. Davis, ed. *William Fitzhugh and his Chesapeake World, 1676-1701* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1963) 279-280, as used in Morgan, *American Slavery*, 304.

²⁴ Emory G. Evans, *A Topping People: The Rise and Decline of Virginia’s Old Political Elite, 1680-1790* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009) 13-14. Information about Fitzhugh’s possessions comes from letters by him in the 1680s and 90s as cited in Evans, 208. Of the possessions listed include twenty-nine slaves.

The Tayloes of northern Virginia represent an example of how entrepreneurship, combined with the power of an elite planter family, shaped the new economic landscape that developed in Virginia in the early eighteenth century. The Tayloes, beginning with their patriarch John, operated an extensive business that combined production for the transatlantic export market through exploitation of slave labor, as well as specialized activities that fed into the local exchange system. As their biographer Laura Croghan Kamoie asserts the Tayloes offer a broad example of how the planter class regarded business activities in colonial Virginia, revealing that their peers shared their incentives for diverse economic activity. The new businesses, partnerships, and calculated risks that planters took on aided in informing a more entrenched economic culture in Virginia at the beginning of the century. The Tayloes constructed sawmills, gristmills, and built and/or purchased their own ships. They bolstered a local economy with store goods and attempted cultivating new export items such as iron. Tayloe and his fellow planters also increased their profits by entering into the slave trade. The enterprises augmented their earnings from tobacco which continued to be marginally profitable.²⁵

By the eighteenth century economic and cultural shifts were taking place rapidly around the Atlantic. England's financial revolution allowed the first significant instance of the concept of public debt, as well as new forms of credit and a call for a national bank. The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, which ended the War of Spanish Succession, transferred the Asiento (permission granted by Spain to sell slaves and goods to the

²⁵ Kamoie, *Irons*, 2-3.

Spanish colonies) to Great Britain, opening Spanish markets to British trade and smuggling. Trevor Burnard observes that Britain's financial conditions in the eighteenth century allowed for economic and social direction that was, "decidedly upward." Burnard asserts, the British Atlantic achieved growth in almost all areas in the eighteenth century. The development of British influence in the Atlantic during the eighteenth century offered varied opportunities for a variety entrepreneurial activities. As Atlantic markets, investment opportunities, and cultural expression broadened, entrepreneurs found increasingly diverse means to potentially increase their economic and social standing, although predictably many of the ventures met with financial failure.²⁶

A culture designed to service and profit from the burgeoning Chesapeake and expanding frontier arose as a result of Britain's involvement in the tobacco trade, particularly from Glasgow business interests. Jacob Price writes extensively on British overseas trade from 1660-1790, crediting a growing demand for American and Asian goods, an expanding market in re-exported manufactured goods from the colonies, and a wide variety of innovative credit practices for the dynamism of English and Scottish foreign trade in the eighteenth century.²⁷ He pays particular attention to the Chesapeake tobacco trade and the rise of the Glasgow tobacco firms in the middle decades of the eighteenth century. It is the credit practices established by trade between these two interests that Price believes enabled the Piedmont frontier to develop. Glasgow's

²⁶ Trevor Burnard, "The British Atlantic," in Jack P. Greene and Philip Morgan, eds. *Atlantic History: A Critical Appraisal* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 112.

²⁷ Jacob M. Price, "What did Merchants Do? Reflections on British Overseas Trade, 1660-1790," *Journal of Economic History* Vol. XLIX, No. 2 (June 1989) 267-284.

influence on Virginia tobacco cultivation ultimately discouraged crop diversification leading to a credit crisis in the years preceding the Revolution.²⁸ But even with the negative effects of Glasgow interests, expansion of tobacco cultivation west of the Chesapeake created a need in trade and services to support the new plantations and farming communities in the Piedmont and Shenandoah Valley. Individuals who could supply the frontier with goods and services often worked in an official or semi-official capacity, acting simultaneously as planter, merchant, surveyor, trader, and legal representative to connect local communities with the broader British-Atlantic world. Due to the importance of “king tobacco,” Virginia’s southside and backcountry, along with the Chesapeake, gradually became further integrated into the Atlantic world through smaller commercial enterprises organized, operated, and promoted by entrepreneurs.²⁹

David Hancock’s study of London-based international merchants offers a methodological model for examining entrepreneurial subjects. His use of case studies and statistical records as well as profiles of his subjects’ backgrounds and daily lives creates a nuanced portrait of the British-Atlantic commercial world. Hancock not only provides a model for methodology, but he also presents a template for the eighteenth-century

²⁸ Jacob M. Price, “The Rise of Glasgow in the Chesapeake Tobacco Trade, 1707-1775,” *The William and Quarterly*, Vol. 11, No. 2, Scotland and America (Apr., 1954), pp. 179-199.

²⁹ Warren Hofstra writes extensively about the formation of eighteenth-century backcountry society, especially the Shenandoah Valley, from a local, regional, and global perspective while employing analysis of geography and culture to trace the transition from “open-country neighborhoods,” to “town and country settlements.” See: Warren Hofstra, *The Planting of New Virginia: Settlement and Landscape in the Shenandoah Valley* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005); for a study of Scots-Irish immigration into the backcountry and Shenandoah Valley see Hofstra, *Ulster to America: The Scots-Irish Migration Experience, 1680-1830* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2011). For an analysis of local trade in the area referred to as Virginia’s Southside see Charles J. Farmer’s, *In the Absence of Towns: Settlement and Country Trade in Southside Virginia, 1730-1800* (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1993).

entrepreneurial mind. Hancock identifies a particular group of London merchants who influenced transatlantic trade. Many of them cultivated ties with Virginia planters and entrepreneurs. Hancock's works reveals much about identity as it related to economy in Atlantic world. As Virginia planter saw themselves rising in British circles due to their entrepreneurial success so too did a specific group of London and Glasgow merchants. Hancock subjects, although often operating thousands of miles away from Virginia, effectively demonstrate, like their colonial counterparts, the qualities necessary to combine risk, planning, and innovation to create or build on economic profitability.³⁰

Case Studies

This study examines five individuals who exhibit varying qualities of entrepreneurship ranging from the late seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries. These men's variety of commercial ventures that are instructive, providing a cross section of entrepreneurial enterprises from 1688-1750. The focus on these individuals reveals through their numerous business ventures and relationships a transition in time from the economically porous and often lawless Chesapeake maritime culture at the end of the

³⁰ David Hancock, *Citizens of the World London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997). Hancock's analysis skillfully combines quantitative and qualitative research to bring the identity formation of his subjects into sharper focus. For works addressing economy and culture in an Atlantic context see; Ronald Hoffman, Mechel Sobel, and Fredricka J. Teute, eds., *Through a Glass Darkly: Reflections on Personal Identity in Early America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Nicholas Canny and Anthony Pagden, *Colonial Identity in the Atlantic World 1500-1800* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987); Phyllis Whitman Hunter, *Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World: Massachusetts Merchants, 1670-1780* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001). While focusing on the seventeenth century James Horn offers insight into identity in the Chesapeake. See: James Horn *A Land as God Made It: Jamestown and the Birth of America* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); *Adapting to a New World: English Society in the Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

seventeenth century to a more cohesive but slave dependent planter society of the middle of the eighteenth century. In addition to taking part in disparate commercial activities the subjects of this study came from dissimilar backgrounds. One was a ship's surgeon, at first in service of the English navy but eventually a participant in privateering expeditions in the Pacific; another was one of Virginia's most prominent planter patriarchs who built an economic foundation for a regional dynasty that still has deep roots in Virginia; another a former government scribe and self-proclaimed historian; another a Lieutenant Governor born into a military career in North Africa who distinguished himself in battle in Europe, and finally, a printer who learned his trade in England and transferred his knowledge to the position of first official printer in Virginia. Examining these five disparate individuals allows identification of similarities and dissimilarities within their business activities to reveal in more focused detail the cultural and economic fabric of Virginia as it transitioned into the eighteenth century. The motivations of these men differed, sometimes greatly, but in most instances their primary goals involved individual monetary gain within the pretext of the promotion and development of the colony and the empire.

The first chapter centers around Lionel Wafer (d. 1705). Wafer was a surgeon and buccaneer who travelled extensively throughout the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. He most notably performed reconnaissance in Panama where he was held captive by Indians for several months. He took part in buccaneering expeditions in the Pacific, harassing Spanish vessels and compiling reconnaissance information about flora and fauna for a

published travel-narrative that also included accounts of his adventures.³¹ When he was not at sea Wafer spent a considerable amount of time in and around the Chesapeake Bay, a launching point for his and many other piratical operations at the end of the seventeenth century. In 1688 he was arrested for piracy and imprisoned in Jamestown. He spent 15 months in the Jamestown jail but was eventually released, having never been brought to trial.

The purpose of chapter one is to illuminate Wafer as the personification of the waning days of Spanish influence in the Caribbean and Atlantic world and the emergence of English influence in the region. This change was readily apparent in the economic and political culture of the Chesapeake during Wafer's day. As a pirate-surgeon, Wafer entered into highly risky but potentially profitable illegal business ventures that took advantage of Spain's weakening status and elevated English presence in international waters. The chapter emphasizes how, in the seventeenth century, the Chesapeake depended on a loosely associated maritime network whose bases ranged from Port Comfort, Virginia to Port Royal, Jamaica, to Portsmouth, Hampshire. Wafer's entanglements with the colonial authorities further underscore the lawless and porous characteristics of Chesapeake commerce and allows for the understanding of entrepreneurship during this period as an informal series of decisions and agreements that

³¹ Lionel Wafer, *A New Voyage and description of the isthmus of America. Giving an account of the authors abode there,...* By Lionel Wafer. The second edition. To which are added, *The natural history of those parts*, (London: printed for James Knapton, 1704), facsimile by Ecco Eighteenth Century Print Editions, Gale Cengage Learning (Boston, 2013) 1.

took advantage of Spain's diminished influence and England's yet-to-be-realized consolidation of power in the region.

In contrast to Wafer, chapter two examines the emergence of the planter class in the Virginia colony at the end of the seventeenth century with the example of William Byrd (ca. 1652-1704). Along with being a successful planter, Byrd enjoyed status as a member of House of Burgesses and Governor's Council, Indian trader, explorer, auditor-general and receiver general putting him in charge of the colony's royal revenue. He also served three terms as acting governor of the colony. Byrd was the son of John Byrd, a London goldsmith, which advantageously tied him to the financial institutions of London and Europe. The planter also expanded his uncle's Indian trade business, a process by which Byrd exploited and allegedly enslaved Native Americans. Byrd, and especially his son William Byrd II, also benefitted significantly by the increase of slave labor by planters of the Chesapeake. Initially Byrd sided with Nathaniel Bacon, his business partner, during Bacon's Rebellion but became ambivalent as the conflict progressed. He ingratiated himself with the commission sent to investigate the rebellion and earned political positions which put him in good standing to build on his wealth and status with a number of commercial enterprises.

Byrd provides a lynchpin for the transition of Virginia. Operating at the same time as Wafer, he nevertheless acted as a predictor of the planter-dominated culture that would emerge in Virginia and continue through the antebellum period. Byrd's generation typified the planter who constantly worked to diversify his operations, taking on a

number of side money-making projects that either augmented his tobacco planting operation or allowed for alternate income during the lean periods. Also typical of many Virginia planters by the end of the seventeenth century, he parlayed his social standing and transatlantic connections into lucrative legislative positions, eventually becoming the colony's auditor general, a position that allowed for a 7 per cent take from the annual output of the colony. Byrd achieved all of this in no small part due to his exploitation of Indian trade, his involvement in the growing slave trade, and his calculated positioning during the Bacon crisis. The contrast between Wafer's maritime world of concealed commerce and the world of Byrd's highly socialized and exploitative maneuvering reveals a transforming culture that would increasingly become dependent on the business decisions of men like Byrd.

Chapter three examines Robert Beverly Jr. (1667-1722). Beverley was born in Middlesex County, Virginia. He was schooled in England, probably in Yorkshire. He took up residence in Jamestown in the 1690s using family connections to obtain prestigious positions, first in a local capacity but soon working his way through important clerkships that dealt with administrative and legal matters for the entire colony. Litigation over the property ownership of his land in Elizabeth City County prompted Beverley to return to England in 1703 where, seeing a need for an accurate portrayal of the first decades of the colony's existence, he wrote *The History and Present State of Virginia, In Four Parts*. Beverley designed the book to be used to entice immigration from Europe to Virginia, serving the dual purpose of promoting more economic activity in the Chesapeake and western frontier and bringing Beverley notoriety and income from the

sales of his work. Beverley's *History* is now looked on as one of colonial America's most detailed, if often inaccurate, contemporaneous accounts of colonial political and natural history.³²

The work also stands as an example of elite attitudes toward what it meant to be a Virginian in the first decade of the eighteenth century. Although Beverley tried to identify himself as a native of the land, stark omissions of laws and circumstances regarding slavery and romanticized, outdated accounts of English-Indian relations painted a picture intended to cast favorable light on Virginia and the book's author, excluding any unpleasant realities. Detailed passages from the *History* aggrandized the colony's founding and potential for varieties of agricultural pursuits. Beverley's objective was clearly to promote Virginia as an Eden ready for profit-motivated English and French immigration, presenting opportunities for entrepreneurial activities in numerous ventures in the colony. *The History* provides, for the purpose of this study, a glimpse of the colonial elitist vision of Virginia as a thriving, agriculturally diverse economic system, intrinsically attached to the English colonial and Atlantic worlds.

In addition, Chapter Three places Beverley within the transatlantic world of books. Beverley, perhaps more than creating an influential piece of promotional literature, intended to capitalize off the English reading public's fascination with travel and natural history literature. He actively petitioned the publisher of a previous erroneous account of Virginian life to be allowed to set the record straight. In doing so Beverley

³² Robert Beverley *The History and Present State of Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947) xvii

tapped into an economy of knowledge that generated updated political and ideological thought in the English Atlantic world. The print media of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, relying on travel narratives, atlases, maps, and accounts of indigenous life, creating a transformative perception of colonial identity both in the colony itself and in the mother country. Beverley saw an opportunity to take advantage of his knowledge of Virginia and the reading public's hunger for such works, to generate personal income amid a renewed awareness of Virginia's potential as moneymaking environment. By doing so, he also contributed to the changing perception of England toward Virginia's colonists by re-envisioning the natural environment and economically motivated agency within the colony.³³

If Beverley's *History* provides an example of the kind of literature that attempted to lure settlers and investors to Virginia, the subject of Chapter Four provides an example of someone who actively worked in Virginia's backcountry to make that a possibility. Alexander Spotswood (1676-1740) was the lieutenant governor of Virginia from 1710-1722. He was born in Tangier to a Scottish army surgeon and joined the English army

³³Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge is Power: the Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991) 3. For works on the history and significance of the book in Europe see Robert Darnton "What is the History of Books?" *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991); Nicholas Barker, *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society: The Clark Lectures, 1986-1987* (New Castle, DE.: Oak Knoll Press, 2001); Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1994); Peter D. McDonald, *Making Meaning: Printers of the Mind and Other Essays (Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book)* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002)

before turning twenty. Britain awarded Spotswood his Virginia position for his services during the War of Spanish Succession.³⁴

As governor, Spotswood undertook many projects to promote commerce and extend imperial authority west of the Chesapeake including an expedition into the Shenandoah Valley meant to open the colony to westward expansion. The acting lead-administrator of the colony, Spotswood employed his experience as quarter-master general in the Duke of Marlborough's European coalition army to diversify and develop the colony.³⁵ He also presented a figure who contributed to the new attitude of the crown toward the Virginia colony. Britain chose Spotswood because of his tenacity. The governing body of colonial affairs in London, The Lords of Trade and Plantations believed that the colony warranted more royal authority, a provision that would stem any threat of uprisings such as Bacon's Rebellion. Spotswood demonstrated his determined administrative qualities, rankling the House of Burgesses over the tobacco trade in the process. But he also committed a considerable amount of energy toward promoting settlement and industry projects in the backcountry including iron mining and manufacture. He sponsored the immigration of German ironworkers to the settlement Germanna, west of Fredericksburg, an effort meant to stimulate economic growth and population increase west of the Chesapeake.³⁶

³⁴ Stephen Saunders Webb, *Marlborough's America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) biographical insert between 392-393, 333.

³⁵ The mostly ceremonial title of Governor belonged to George Hamilton, First Earl of Orkney, who resided in London.

³⁶ *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood. Lieutenant Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1710-1722*, R.A. Brock, ed. (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1872) 1. Walter Havighurst, *Alexander*

Spotswood is pivotal in the changing economic, political, and social climate of Virginia. Past governors brought innovation and change to the colony, but Spotswood represents, more than any other official up to his time, an administrator who attempted to bring Virginia into the fold of eighteenth-century British Empire, while developing and diversifying its interior with immigrant settlers. Spotswood's battles with the Chesapeake elite shed light on resistance to the crown's invigorated effort to nudge the burgesses back into line. Both the Empire and the Virginia elite were solidifying power in their respective spheres, and Spotswood's struggles and successes demonstrate an administrator navigating through those tensions to initiate his entrepreneurial projects.

Chapter five focuses on William Parks (d. 1750). Parks was Virginia's first authorized "public printer" for the colonial government from 1730-1750. He published the first comprehensive collection of Virginia laws in 1733 and founded the colony's first newspaper, *The Virginia Gazette* in 1736. Parks cultivated favor with Virginia officials by publishing works bolstering the colony's legal, economic, and political life. He also published a Virginia Almanac as well as bank forms, account books that helped to standardize colonial commerce, and North America's first cookbook and medical manual.³⁷

Spotswood: Portrait of Governor (Williamsburg, New York: Colonial Williamsburg, Holt Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1967) 1.

³⁷A. Franklin Parks, *William Parks: The Colonial Printer in the Transatlantic World of the Eighteenth Century* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012) 4. Parks, *William Parks*, 4-8. Lawrence C. Wroth, *William Parks: Printer and Journalist of England and America* (Richmond: The Appeals Press, Inc., 1926) 9-12.

The trajectory of Parks' life predicts the archetype of the self-made-man in the Atlantic World. Working his way through the apprenticeship system in England's west country, Richmond, and London the printer not only learned the technical and business aspects of publishing but also learned, in at least one instance the hard way, the importance of avoiding the rancor of government officials. This worked in his favor when he landed in Maryland to start the *Maryland Gazette* a proving ground which prepared him for his later work in Virginia. In Maryland Parks adjusted to colonial life, distinguishing between the sensibilities of the Chesapeake and the London Metropolis. This is apparent in comparisons between his English publications and his printed works in Maryland and Virginia. The most glaring difference is the dozens of notices regarding the sale and capture of slaves in both publications.

The Virginia Gazette, founded by Parks in 1736, mirrors attitudes and desires of colonists and reinforces the condition that while Chesapeake colonists had a distinctive set a values based on their practical experience they still held interests tied tightly to worldviews emanating from London. These elements of the Parks' published works, especially the *Gazette*, show how the printer, after years of varied success and failure in England, presented this dual-identity. The wider focus of the chapter also reveals how the colony had changed since Lionel Wafer's day. The weekly newspaper acted as a cultural and economic emulsifying agent within the colony, allowing the collective cultural and political identity of colonists to emerge on a regular and frequent basis. This, combined with Parks' commission to print Virginia's laws, including the 1705 slave codes, emphasizes the steady transition to a tangible working colony whose economy and

culture increasingly depended on slavery. As slavery grew so did opportunities to exploit its presence. As Parks demonstrated, paid advertisements for slaves, rewards for capture, and commissions to codify slave codes all became indelible evidence of the entrenchment of slavery in Virginia culture.

These five individuals demonstrate the varied degree of business activity in Virginia over a seven decade period. They are parts of much larger community that assisted in transitioning the colony from a porous outback to an integrated component of the Britain's North American empire. Working to find success for themselves they simultaneously employed the opportunities their predecessors supplied to them while bolstering the entire colony's economic potential. Most of them, with possibly the exception of Wafer, operated within an institutionalized system of slave labor and in some cases capitalized on Virginia's slave dependency to seek business ventures and reinforce their standings in the Atlantic network of exchange. In doing so they were vigorous participants in the transformation of Virginia, creating a market and economic culture that would influence subsequent generations of Virginians.

CHAPTER II

“NO PREY NO PAY,” LIONEL WAFER AND PIRATICAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN LATE SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY VIRGINIA

So my dear friend, do not stay long and far wandering away from home,
leaving your possessions, and in your house men so overbearing, for fear
that they will divide up all your property and eat it away, so all your
journey will have no profit.¹

Homer

In April of 1688 Captain Simon Rowe of the H.M.S. *Dumbarton* brought on board three men navigating the Chesapeake Bay by open boat to Point Comfort at the extreme southern tip of the Virginia Peninsula, at the mouth of one of the world largest natural harbors, Hampton Roads. Rowe seized the men's goods and charged the three sailors with piracy, acting under the supervision of his commander Sir Robert Holmes who had been commissioned by King James II the previous year to clear the Atlantic seaboard and Caribbean Sea of pirates. Supporting Holmes in the suppression of piracy was Virginia's absentee governor, Lord Howard of Effingham, who sustained Rowe's accusation, calling for the forfeiture of the men's goods into the hands of colonial officials. King James' proclamation granted that all seized vessels' profits would be

¹ *The Odyssey of Homer*, Richard Lattimore ed., trans., (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 1967, 2007) 59.

awarded to Holmes' squadron, and acting on this provision Effingham, Rowe, and Holmes pursued the prosecution of their captives vigorously. Interred in the Jamestown jail, the sailors awaited a decision on their fate while building a defense that they hoped would exonerate them, restore their goods, or at least, in the most severe of scenarios, save them from the gallows.¹

Among the three accused was a former ship's surgeon named Lionel Wafer.² Wafer began his life at sea at an early age, claiming "My first going abroad was in the *Great Ann* of London, Capt. Zachary Brown commander, bound for Bantam in the Isle of Java, in the East-Indies, in the year 1677."³ He was the assistant to the *Great Ann*'s surgeon, and by 1679 he had returned from his first journey to the Pacific, landing in Port Royal, Jamaica, a thriving center of English transoceanic commerce, legitimate and otherwise. Another Port Royal wayfarer, Captain Edmund Cook, tempted by reports of successful raids against the Spanish on the Panama Peninsula, recruited Wafer to join his crew as surgeon, a necessary position for an expedition that could expect to see heavy fighting. Wafer, with Cook and his men, joined the forces of Bartholomew Sharp and

¹ The accusation of piracy against the three can be pieced together from the Colonial Record Office's Calendar of State Papers available in CDROM format, *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial: North America and the West Indies 1574-1739*, published in association with the Public Record Office, Karen Ordahl Kupperman, John c. Appleby, Mandy Banton consulting editors (London: Routledge, 2000).

² Although I will refer to Wafer by the name he uses in his narrative, official documents name him Lionell Delawafer, Waffer, or Wasser. Judging from his professed knowledge of Gaelic Wafer may have been of Scottish origin, the son of a soldier stationed in Ireland. The English version of the name Wafer is associated with the Huguenots. See L.E. Elliott Joyce, "Lionel Wafer and his Times," in the Hakluyt Society's edition of *A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America* (Oxford, Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1934) xiii.

³ Lionel Wafer, *A New Voyage and description of the isthmus of America. Giving an account of the authors abode there,...By Lionel Wafer. The second edition. To which are added, The natural history of those parts...* (London: printed for James Knapton, 1704), facsimile by Ecco Eighteenth Century Print Editions, Gale Cengage Learning (Boston, 2013) 1.

John Coxon in Panama with the purpose of sacking Spanish forts and gold mines, crossing the Peninsula on foot to the South Sea where they would seize Spanish ships.⁴ With Cook's English raiders was an ambitious young seaman named William Dampier who would chronicle the expedition along with descriptions of his later circumnavigation of the globe in his famous work, *A New Voyage Round the World*.⁵ Wafer and his companions would spend the next several years at sea, raiding Spanish ships and colonies in both Panama and the Spanish Pacific. Employing a complex system of innovation, planning, risk, and profit-sharing, the buccaneers displayed characteristics of the capitalistic enterprises that would gain firmer footing in the eighteenth century.

It is the purpose of this chapter to assert that Lionel Wafer was an example of someone who worked in an entrepreneurial capacity within the Caribbean/Atlantic economic network of the late seventeenth century. The chapter argues that the form of piracy Wafer practiced represents a form of joint business venture that fully exhibited specific elements of the entrepreneurial mindset. This mindset permeated the waters of the Caribbean and the Atlantic at the dawn of the eighteenth century, allowing for a

⁴ Other than Wafer's own narrative there are no book-length biographies of the seaman-surgeon. A helpful background essay regarding what is known about Wafer's life and career is L.E. Joyce's introduction of the second series of the Hakluyt Society's edition of *A New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America* (Oxford, Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1934) xi-lxxi.

⁵ Dampier wrote extensively about his years at sea. For a complete volume of his writings see William Dampier, *The Complete Works of William Dampier: Containing Particular Descriptions of Life in the Torrid Zone at the Dawn of Modern Science and at the intersection of the Golden Age of Sail, the Golden Age of Exploration, and the Golden Age of Piracy* C.J. Cooney ed. (The Tomes of William Dampier through Forward Thinking Press, 2014). For a meticulously researched book that pieces together the Caribbean and South Seas travels of Dampier, Wafer, and their companions see Glyndwr Williams, *The Great South Sea: English Voyages and Encounters, 1570-1750* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). For a recent biography of Dampier see Diana and Michael Preston, *A Pirate of Exquisite Mind* (New York: Walker and Company, 2009).

porous and ambiguous relationship between legitimate and illegitimate seagoing trade practices. Wafer's experience and connections with Caribbean buccaneers allowed access to the planning of transoceanic expeditions from both Port Royal, Jamaica and Point Comfort, Virginia. In addition, Wafer spent considerable time in what is now the Central American country of Panama whose eastern shore meets the Caribbean Sea. His activity relied heavily on the Spanish model of imperial presence in the Atlantic and Caribbean as he and his partners planned their ventures around the activity of Spanish interests capturing both Spanish ships and raiding Spanish towns. Wafer also operated during the very heart of the golden age of piracy, a period that was built upon the activity of generations of Caribbean buccaneering against Spain.



Figure 1. *Nova Virginiae Tabula*, John Smith (Amsterdam, 1633). Accessed from the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Online Collection, <http://mesda.org>.

Wafer's story also represents a shift in relations between the mainland colony of Virginia and its mother country during the final decade of the seventeenth century. Captured during the year of the Glorious Revolution, Wafer and his companions operated on the eve of a new era of British assertions toward authority. English policy after 1688 consistently pushed to organize and heavily monitor colonial trade exclusively for the benefit of Britain's imperial aims. These objectives attempted to disrupt the haphazard networks of illicit and semi-legal trade that defined colonial commerce in the seventeenth century. The newly formed executive advisory committee, the Board of Trade, allowed colonial officials in London to sort through the tangle of provincial laws and customs while old, often ineffectual, governing bodies such as the Privy Council enjoyed renewed and extended powers of regulation. Increasingly colonial governors acted as the spearheads of this newly defined relationship between colony and mother country, frequently becoming active representatives of the crown rather than figureheads of colonial assemblies. Wafer's struggles in Virginia against colonial authority occurred precisely during this transition and adaptation of governmental power, which was only moderately successful.⁶

⁶ Richard Middleton, *Colonial America: A History, 1585-1776* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996) 192. See also George H. Guthridge, *The Colonial Policy of William III in America and the West Indies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922); J.M. Sosin, *English America and the Revolution of 1688: Royal Administration and the Structure of Provincial Government* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982); J.M. Sosin, *English America and Imperial Inconstancy: The Rise of Provincial Autonomy, 1696-1715* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985); J.K. Steele, *Politics of the Colonial Policy: The Board of Trade in Colonial Administration 1696-1720* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1968); Davis S. Lovejoy, *The Glorious Revolution in America* (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1987).

The Virginia colony stands as a model for the types of conflicts between colonial authorities and practitioners of smuggling and piracy in the late seventeenth century that allowed for illegitimate entrepreneurial activity to flourish. From its founding in 1607 until the last decades of the seventeenth century the Virginia had been an outpost of a concerted effort by the English to establish a colonial presence in the New World. As April Hatfield asserts, Virginia was a colony that looked to Spanish examples for its development into a profitable region for planting, mining, settlement, and commerce. Influenced by Spain, those involved with English trade interests viewed mainland and Caribbean colonies as intrinsically linked by their collective European heritage. Much of the reason for this was the gulf that divided English colonies from each other which included both wide expanses of water and Indian territory.⁷ These unclaimed expanses would contract gradually so that by the end of the century, as English colonists settled and explored more territory, a new concept of intercolonial relations emerged where mainland colonies became increasingly connected by networks of trade and immigration.⁸ Lois Green Carr augments this interpretation of a colony in transition by revealing an increased anglicization of the Chesapeake region, arguing that the Chesapeake became a significant component in the British Atlantic World by the eighteenth century. Shifting away from the contesting of Spanish models of transoceanic exchanges and relations, English colonies increasingly integrated into the fold of an emerging transatlantic British culture and commerce. Still connected to the Caribbean

⁷ Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia*, 219.

⁸ Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia*, 221.

network of exchange, especially along the mainland coastlines and, in the case of the Chesapeake and South Carolina Low Country, a growing dependence on Caribbean and African slaves, mainland colonies nevertheless became part of the developing British transatlantic world that would allow them access to the wave of consumption that overran England in the first half of the eighteenth century.⁹ These strengthening economic, political, and cultural ties to the imperial base foretold the relationship that would take firm hold by the middle of the eighteenth century. But contention and authoritative ambiguity defines this early period of transition in the Chesapeake region.

Late seventeenth-century Virginia, while not quite the bustling entrepôt of Jamaica, still drew similarities and influences from its Caribbean neighbors. Widespread royal authority had not definitively taken hold in either place, and often the difference between legal and illegal commerce blurred into an uncertain milieu of trading practices. Much of the traffic coming in and out of the Chesapeake went unpoliced as the vastness of the water feature allowed for sizable vessels to pass through undeterred. In the 1660s, during the Anglo-Dutch war, Virginia oversaw the entrance to the bay by employing manned forts, but because of the inlet's size forts were often ineffectual in the Chesapeake against vessels that could evade their guns and slip through to the James, York, and Rappahannock Rivers. Governor William Berkeley addressed this problem in a letter to Secretary Lord Arlington in 1666. Berkeley states: "Find that all forts they can build, though never so strong, will not absolutely answer what they are designed for; the

⁹ Lois Green Carr, "Introduction," *Colonial Chesapeake*, Lois Green Carr, Philip D. Morgan, Jean B. Russo, eds., (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988) 9.

entrance into the province is so large that any enemy's ship may ride out all danger of the greatest cannon in the world."¹⁰ Virginia often augmented the shortfalls of their forts by devising ad hoc guard-ships to protect their waters. Thomas Ludwell, writing in 1667, during the Anglo-Dutch War, states "We are in a flat open country full of great rivers, impossible to be totally secured from the incursions of the enemy...to prevent such mischief, we have ordered a fleet of boats and shallops in every river to be, well manned and armed, to attend the motions of the enemy, and to fight them if they seek to land."¹¹ England did send a frigate, the *Elizabeth*, to protect the Bay in 1667, but the man ordered to protect the harbor showed his own self-interest over any loyalty to the colony or the Crown. Captain Roger Jones captained a small sloop and was accused of cheating for inflating the number of men he carried in order to collect higher wages. The allegations continue, "he is man who from nothing pretends to have risen in a few years to great estate." The Council of Virginia accused Jones of receiving "French wines" from pirates after they saw "that he was one of themselves."¹² Allegedly Jones set himself up well by using the extra pay for nonexistent crewmen as well as kickbacks from pirate vessels he detained in the Chesapeake.

In the 1680s colonial officials' relations with captains of guard-ships were particularly low. Part of the reason lay in the fact that guard-ships, now on the hunt for illicit trade, disrupted the quasi-legal income of Virginia's ranking officials. Virginia

¹⁰ Governor Berkeley and Council of Virginia to Sec. Lord Arlington, July 13, 1666, CO 1/20, No. 117.

¹¹ British Colonial Papers. vol. xx., No. 117. From Philip Alexander Bruce, LL.D., *Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century* vol. 2 (Glouster, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1910, 1964) 179.

¹² "Lieutenant-Governor and Council of Virginia to Lords of trade and Plantations," CO 5/1306, No. 111, and C 5/1358, pp. 212-215.

governor Lord Effingham was particularly severe towards the men charged with guarding the harbor. Effingham is reported to have claimed “My footmen would make as good captains as they.”¹³ The two ships charged with protecting the colony, the *Quaker* and the *Deptford*, were captained by Thomas Allen and John Crofts respectively. Crofts sharply criticized the governor’s treatment of him. In a letter to Samuel Pepys, the Chief Secretary of the Admiralty, Crofts writes, “The Governor is very unkind to us, and told me that if I did not obey his orders he would send me home in irons. I have carried several ships to be tried by him and the General Court, but he discharged them all without trial.” In a letter the following month Crofts again accuses the governor of turning a blind eye to illicit activity. This time he gives specifics. “Cruising off the Cape of Virginia I met with vessels from New York and New England which are employed in illicit trade, and it is for fear of my meeting with them that my Lord is so unkind to me. Again, most of the collectors of Virginia are of the Council, and my Lord takes it ill that I should examine their ships especially. He has twenty shillings for every small vessel that comes in and thirty shillings for others, besides other charges.”¹⁴ But Crofts also displayed a character that was not necessarily even-tempered and fair when carrying out his duties. Effingham relays Crofts’ behavior by stating, “Some officers of H.M.S. Deptford, whereof Captain Crofts is commander, came to me and complained of his ill usage of them and of some misdemeanor committed aboard the ketch by one who he owned as his wife, to the hazard and danger of the ship’s company.” Crofts chose to avoid the charges

¹³ “Extracts from letters of Captain Allen, H.M.S. Quaker, and Captain Crofts, H.M.S. Deptford, to Mr. Pepys,” CO 1/63, Nos. 60, 60I.

¹⁴ “Extracts from Letters,” CO 1/63, Nos. 60, 60I.

by sailing to Maryland, prompting Effingham's sharp criticism to the Earl of Sunderland. Effingham stressed the urgency of curtailing Crofts' activity in the region, "If the King will curb his irregularities it will certainly be for his service, for the benefit of the merchants and for the strengthening of royal authority here."¹⁵ Effingham urged that royal authority, represented and overseen by himself, will promote and increase commercial activity in the colony. The instance is one of many which reveal the contested authority in the Chesapeake that allowed illegitimate commerce to continue.

Who truly represented that royal authority, the governor or the ship captains, was at the heart of the dispute. Crofts' commanding officer, Thomas Allen, was also critical of his reception in Virginia and colonial officials who used their position to protect their income. Allen's service to the King is apparent in his report that relays his defeat of smuggling vessels from New York and New England but he also takes Crofts' side in the charges Effingham makes by stating "I understand that Lord Howard [Effingham] has sent home complaints against Captain Crofts. People out here, whom I thought I might have trusted, have treated me very ill. I have told Lord Howard that I will protect Captain Crofts in any unjust action." Allen goes on to state that he believes that the Council in Virginia is not competent to deal with naval affairs and that either the King or a naval court-marshal should decide matters such as Crofts'.¹⁶ With such animosity between

¹⁵ "Governor Lord Howard of Effingham to the Earl of Sunderland, June 29, 1687, CO Item 1322, Vol. 12 (1685-1688), pp 387-388.

¹⁶ "Extracts from Letters," CO 1/63, Nos. 60, 60I.

patrol captains and colonial administrators it is little wonder an effective concerted effort against smuggling and piracy succeeded only in isolated instances.

This would begin to change by the 1690s. The lessons learned over the dispute between Effingham, Allen, and Crofts possibly prompted the commissioning of a ship in 1691 to defend the colony with much more specific aims. It was made implicit that the *Henry Prize*'s Captain Finch was charged to carry out any command given by the Virginia authorities.¹⁷ By 1694 Governor Edmund Andros had hired several vessels to patrol the coastline for illegal traders and pirates. Nearly thirty years of trying to quell illegal trade and ward off enemies and pirates had gradually allowed a presence of guard-ships that represented, at least tenuously, the combined authority of the colony and the Crown.

Guard-ships may have been used to curb illegal trade but their other purpose during peace-time was to combat piracy. Pirates harassed the coastline and bay region of Virginia consistently from the 1680 well into the eighteenth century. In 1682 a pirate ship entered the Capes of Virginia and anchored at the mouth of the York River. The pirates sent several boats filled with armed crews up river to raid the plantations of Rebecca Leake and John Williams. They were pursued by authorities all the way to Rhode Island where they were put in irons and brought back to Virginia for trial.¹⁸ A portion of the party escaped, but two of the crew were sentenced to hang. Their appeal to be spared

¹⁷ Bruce, *Institutional History of Virginia*, 184-185.

¹⁸ Minutes of Council, June 25, 1682, Colonial Entry Book, 1680-95, p. 129.

made enough of an impression that they were granted a pardon by the Governor and the case was referred to the King to decide if they should go free.¹⁹

The mid-1680s were a particularly active period for pirates in and around the Virginia colony, so much so that the Secretary of the Council, Nicholas Spencer, advised that guard-ships should not take a pirate force on but rather carry information about their location to the authorities.²⁰ The council issued a similar order to river pilots that they should not serve a ship who they suspected of being manned by pirates. This order seems logical enough but buccaneers often masqueraded as legitimate seamen, only to reveal their true aims when they had a vessel close enough to capture.²¹ In 1684 Effingham issued an order that if a pirate ship was spotted on the water around Virginia a commissioned officer of the district should inform the governor and raise a militia to defend the most vulnerable areas in the region.²² The strategy seems to have paid off for in the following year Effingham reported that militias had succeeded in capturing marauding pirates before they could return to their ships.

The combination of contested royal authority, consistent smuggling and illicit trade operations, profit sharing between colonial officials, and the heavy presence of pirates in the surrounding waters reveal a picture of a struggling mainland colony that had not fully coalesced into what it would become in the eighteenth century. Much like J. H. Elliott's description of the Caribbean as a place where trade and piracy could be one and

¹⁹ Minutes of Council, Dec, 13, 1682, Colonial Entry Book, 1680-95, p. 147.

²⁰ "Secretary Spencer to Secretary Jenkins," British Colonial Papers, vol. li., No. 30.

²¹ Colonial Entry Book, 1680-95, p. 180.

²² Colonial Entry Book, 1680-95, p 200.

the same and where buccaneers, merchants, and planters became vacillating collaborators, Virginia's commercial traffic in the late seventeenth century was an extension of that English Caribbean sphere.²³ The presence of pirates, many of them coming from the proving grounds of the West Indies, reinforced this connection that came into existence through England's continuous pressure upon Spain's waning glory. The single difference was Spain's negligible presence in the Virginia colony, but Virginia still reacted to currents that were generated by the English and Spanish Caribbean worlds. Lionel Wafer was a living example of someone who looked for financial gain and employment within this Caribbean maelstrom. His travels necessarily brought him to Virginia twice. The first time, the colony offered him a place to look for new ventures in the South Seas, the second time offered him a place to settle. In 1688, long after the Panama expedition and long years sailing the Pacific coast of South America, Wafer came into the hands of a tumultuous colonial authority that attempted to punish him for his efforts toward financial and professional independence.

Wafer and Piracy on the Eve of the Eighteenth Century

Wafer increased his experience and knowledge of Atlantic and Pacific seafaring in the early part of the 1680s during the Panama expedition. The mission met with limited success, but Wafer's part in it allowed for a better understanding of the people and geography of the region, inspiring a complex colonization project in Panama the following decade. Wafer, having injured his knee in a gunpowder explosion, was unable

²³ Elliott, *Empires*, 224.

to follow at the pace of the expedition and remained behind with two others in the party, Richard Gobson and John Hingson. The group remained in the Panamanian forest for roughly four months, allowing Wafer to study the medicinal remedies of the Cuna Indians while they attended to his injuries. The extended time that Wafer spent on the peninsula provided an opportunity for the surgeon to compile information that would bring him notoriety in England later in life. Wafer, following the success of his contemporary Dampier and many other adventurers, published a narrative of his travels in 1699 that sought to satisfy the reading public's hunger for descriptions of remote lands and peoples. The centerpiece of the narrative is his description of Panama and the Cuna Indians.

By the spring of 1683 Wafer was back in Atlantic waters. Attention caused by the raiding of Panama resulted in increased vigilance against piracy by Spanish and English officials, prompting buccaneers like Cook and Dampier to maintain a lower profile. Dampier temporarily located to Point Comfort, Virginia, a location where, at least for now, anti-piracy efforts were limited. Cook and Wafer joined Dampier in Virginia in April and the seamen made plans for a much more ambitious project, one that would have them sail around Cape Horn and take up their raiding operations along the west coasts of South and Central America. After four months of preparations Cook, Dampier, and Wafer, in a captured French ship renamed the *Revenge*, set sail for the African coast to put them on course for the crossing of the South Atlantic and the rounding of Cape Horn. While anchored off the coast of Sierra Leone, the expedition captured a Danish ship of 34

guns and renamed her the *Batchelors Delight*. It is the *Batchelor's Delight* that is named in the proceedings and petitions against the captured men in Jamestown in 1688.

The expedition entered the South Seas in February of 1684, and Wafer spent the next four years as surgeon to a crew that participated in sporadic raiding of Spanish ships and settlements. Often raids were conducted more for food and water than any other plunder. In 1684, the man responsible for recruiting Wafer into the buccaneer life, Edmund Cook, took ill and died in the Gulf of Nicoya off the coast of Costa Rica. Edward Davis, who, in 1688, would find himself in the Jamestown jail with Wafer, was awarded command of the *Batchelor's Delight*. In 1685 an anticipated capture of the Spanish gold fleet sailing from Peru backfired when the Spanish, anticipating the pirates, unloaded their cargo safely and sailed to meet the buccaneers in the Bay of Panama.²⁴ Davis and his crew escaped the Spanish fleet, but failure to secure substantial profit from the South Seas venture led to demoralization of the expedition members, and in autumn of 1687 Davis and his crew made the decision to return to the Atlantic. After a harrowing voyage around the Horn where the *Batchelor's Delight* ran south for three weeks in opposing winds, the crew returned to the Atlantic where Wafer, Davis, and Wafer's fellow maroon on the Isthmus of Panama, John Hingson, would face arrest in the Chesapeake Bay.²⁵ Their journey had combined elements of adventure, reconnaissance, and ambition, all qualities that defined the entrepreneurial mindset of the early modern

²⁴Colonial Office Records refer to Davis as Davies. I use Wafer's reference to Davis and only use Davies if contained in a direct quotation or document heading of primary sources that name him. Joyce, "Lionel Wafer and his Times," in Hayluyt Edition of Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, xxxii-xlii.

²⁵ Joyce, Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, xlii.

period. Their participation in high risk ventures to secure potentially significant monetary rewards indicate the motivating factor of the journey, profit, as the single contributing element that bound the men of the expedition together and dictated their actions upon their return to Atlantic Virginia.

Life on a seventeenth-century South Seas expedition would be unforgivably harsh. The Caribbean offered the shelter of some friendly ports and harbors, but the Southern Pacific ports were closed to English seamen. The pirates lived and worked in crowded and often dilapidated ships; food and water were often scarce; and scurvy racked the men on long journeys with low provisions.²⁶ Crews were often multi-national with only one common objective, to profit from the plunder of Spanish ships and towns. But while they are sometimes described as criminal men who had no other recourse except to take to piracy, they also showed themselves to be remarkably curious about the physical and natural worlds into which they sailed, so that their writings often reveal qualities of amateur scientists rather than lawless criminals.²⁷ Wafer fits into this category, especially in the realm of untrained scientist/surgeon.²⁸ He, and other chroniclers of the South Sea ventures, at least saw value in the journey in the sense of reconnaissance as well as profit. In many ways the two are related in that proper reconnaissance could aid, along with maps, in better understanding coastlines,

²⁶ Williams, *The Great South Seas*, 83.

²⁷ Nuala Zahediah, ‘“A Frugal. Prudential and Hopeful Trade”; Privateering in Jamaica, 1655-89’ *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 18 (1990), p. 162. Williams, *The Great South Seas*, 84.

²⁸ It is interesting to note that Wafer, while travelling with and probably participating in the martial activities of pirates, shows compassion when he is confronted with arbitrary death and disaster. His horror at the bodies of Indians along a Peruvian beach especially attest to an empathy that contradicts the romantic version of the blood-thirsty pirate. Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, 166-167.

environments, peoples, flora, and fauna, thus insuring a potentially more successful outcome for future ventures.

A product of the Caribbean maritime world, Wafer's experiences significantly influenced his later career in the South Seas, Virginia, and England. His association with expeditions in Panama and the Pacific Ocean made him a living example of someone motivated as well as caught-up in the century-long tensions between England and Spain in the region. Before his journey to the South Seas, Wafer would become connected with another extension of England's growing influence in the Caribbean and Atlantic worlds, Virginia, where he returned from that journey in 1688 he found himself in the confines of a Jamestown jail. Still struggling to define themselves against the fading years of the Spanish Caribbean and the early period of the British Atlantic, Virginia officials would respond to Wafer and his companions' capture with ambiguity and derision.

Wafer as Venture-Capitalist

Economist Peter T. Leeson studies pirates in terms of their significance to the rise of western capitalism in the early modern period. While not entirely disputing popular culture's (and some historians') depiction of pirate life as a model for egalitarian society set on the high seas, Leeson redirects the attention away from microcosmic social history and replants the primary motivation for piracy—profit—at the center of his economic evaluation. The democracy-like cooperation that buccaneers manifested aboard ship was a necessary ingredient, a means to an end that would ensure the most collectively beneficial outcome with the smallest margin of risk to the whole. Leeson uses Adam

Smith's theory of the invisible hand, a hidden force that guides economic cooperation, to explain that pirates, like most people, were interested in doing what was best for themselves. One avenue to reach this end was to cooperate with others, in private and/or professional partnerships that were mutually beneficial. These partnerships, claims Leeson, create a collective of self-interested individuals, each intently motivated by personal aims but also necessarily motivated to assist each other.²⁹ This model applies itself well to the incentives and relations of Wafer and his companions. While association with each other in periods of duress or danger would assuredly have resulted in a militaristic and masculine bond of loyalty and even friendship, the underlying motivation for the partnership of these men was ultimately monetary.³⁰ Leeson persuasively argues that the *means* of piratical operations in the age of sail—in this case quasi-democratic cooperation that some historians evaluate as a precursor to egalitarian resistance to the capitalist-state—should not obscure the *end* when assessing piracy during the period. According to Leeson many pirates took up the occupation for the simple motivation of profit, symbolized in popular representation as the overflowing treasure-chest. The prospective lucrateness of piracy permeated the motivations and actions of pirates.³¹

²⁹ Peter T. Leeson, *The Invisible Hook: The Hidden Economics of Pirates* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009) 2.

³⁰ Regarding the “invisible hand,” Adam Smith states: “every individual, therefore, endeavors as much as he can both to employ his capital in the support of domestick industry, and so direct that industry that its produce may be of the greatest value; every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. And by directing that industry in such a matter as its produce may be of the greatest value, he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand.” Adam Smith *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1776, 1998) 291-292.

³¹ Leeson, *The Invisible*, 11.

In 1688 Wafer would not have understood himself as an entrepreneur or venture capitalist—the terms not coming to widespread use until the following centuries—but his efforts to involve himself in several varied enterprises throughout his life allow the evaluation of his professional life under the lens of several qualities of entrepreneurship. Wafer’s practicable skill of surgeon gained him passage on sea and land ventures that all exhibited numerous traits of entrepreneurial enterprise, including a complex regimen of planning and execution, a significant level of risk, improvised innovations that were necessary on every sea voyage of the period, and, finally, the potential for appreciable profit. Wafer’s involvement with Cook, Sharp, Dampier, and Davis put him in the company of men whose primary motivation was to find new opportunities to gain profit from their skill as seamen. In this way, Wafer and his compatriots symbolize a joint-venture of private, quasi-legal, late seventeenth-century entrepreneurial enterprise that evolved from a tradition of Atlantic privateering, buccaneering, and piracy.

Wafer’s legitimate career as a ship’s surgeon ended when on his second voyage he landed in Port Royal, Jamaica and found himself in the company of several privateers. The experience introduced him to a syndicate of private seamen who looked for opportunities to capitalize off of Spain’s waning power in the Caribbean. Working as a surgeon for “some months” Wafer “in a while met with Capt. Cook and Capt. Linch, two Privateers who were going out from *Port-Royal*, towards the Coast of *Cartagena*.”³² During the journey Wafer mingled with a number of other privateers who had been

³² Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, 3.

present at the sacking of the Spanish town of Portobela on Panama's Caribbean coast at the beginning of 1680. Among them was William Dampier.³³

Dampier's career at sea also started in the service of legitimate trade, sailing to the Caribbean in 1679 on the *Loyal Merchant* of London, and early on displaying a qualities of entrepreneurship that many of his profession adopted. Originally seeking to participate in log-cutting in Campeche in the Gulf of Mexico, Dampier sought to augment his earnings by trading "rum, sugar, saws, axes, hats, stockings, shoes, and such other commododies, as I knew I would sell among the Campeachy log-wood-cutters."³⁴

Dampier, on further consideration, decided against the idea and "continued at Jamaica all that year in expectation of some other business." Lured by a Captain Hobby to seek trade with Miskito Indians of Central America, Dampier met Bartholomew Sharp's party of privateers and decided his wisest choice would be to join them on their expedition. In April the party of 330 men went ashore on the Panamanian isthmus "carrying with us such provisions as were necessary, and toys wherewith to gratify the wild Indians through whose country we were to pass."³⁵ Dampier and Wafer appear to have weighed the dangers of the private expedition against the potential benefits of such a venture and, perhaps considering the manpower supporting the plan, decided that joining the party was worth the risk.

³³ Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, 4.

³⁴ Dampier is referring to the Campeche Indians of the Yucatan Peninsula. Dampier, *The Complete Works*, 8.

³⁵ Dampier, *The Complete Works*, 8. It is likely that Wafer and Dampier first met in April of 1680 as both men mention "Golden Island" as a stopping point and Wafer mentions the meeting shortly after landing there.

Both Wafer and Dampier's accounts of their ventures in Panama and the South Seas describe, on one hand, a regimen of careful planning on the part of the expedition's leaders, and on the other hand, adaptability to unforeseen conditions that required innovated practices and decisions. Describing a typical pre-voyage preparation, buccaneer chronicler Alexander O. Exquemelin explains that the expedition leaders would usually announce the day of departure, setting in motion the provisioning of the ship where the individual was obligated to collect his own supply of bullets and powder. This qualification indicates that men who wished to join these ventures needed at least enough petty-capital to buy or trade for the considerable ammunition that a privateering venture required. During this supply period the party called a council where a place to provision the expedition with meat was usually decided. Often the crew provisioned the ship through raids of Spanish hog-yards, forcing the hog keeper to release his stock at gun or sword-point. After proper victualing, another council decided what place to go to "seek their desperate fortunes. The planning council would also draw up "Articles, which are put in writing, by way of bond or obligation, which everyone is bound to observe, and all of them, or the chief, set their hands to it."³⁶ Ultimately, the articles stood as a contract for the division of assets among the pirates, and paid careful attention to the rank and position of each member.

³⁶ Alexander O. Exquemelin, Alexis Brown, ed., *The Buccaneers of America: A true account of the most remarkable assaults committed of late years upon the coasts of the West Indies by the Buccaneers of Jamaica and Tortuga (both English and French)* (New York: Dover Publications, 2000) 59-60.

Alexander O. Exquemelin attests to the attention given to loot by pirates in his narrative of seventeenth-century piracy *The Buccaneers of America*. Among the adventure, violence, and threat of capture that marks his description of buccaneer life, Exquemelin describes the distribution of dividends among crew members with almost beatific detail. He states:

All which sums of money, as I have said before, are taken out of the capital sum or common stock of what is got by their piracy. For a very exact and equal dividend is made of the remainder of them all. Yet herein they have also regard to qualities and places. Thus the Captain, or chief Commander, is allotted five or six portions to what the ordinary seamen have; the Master's Mate only two; and other Officers proportionate to their employment. After whom they draw equal parts from the highest even to the lowest mariner, the boys not being omitted. For even these draw half a share.³⁷

Exquemelin's description details a significant element of pirate social and economic hierarchy. The funds are distributed in terms of rank, in other words in order of the professional value of each member of the crew. However egalitarian the labor structure of the vessel, when it came to dividing the shares of profit a hierarchy emerged that sharply signified rank. Exquemelin also explains that those crew members who lost limbs during a raid received extra compensation in addition to the regular allotment of the take, suggesting a kind of worker's compensation for veteran seamen.³⁸ At the center of the distribution of funds in the description are the Articles which "specify, and set down very

³⁷ Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers*, 59-60.

³⁸ Exquemelin claims that the loss of the right arm was worth six hundred pieces of eight, or six slaves; left arm five hundred pieces of eight, five slaves; the same for the right leg; and four hundred pieces of eight for the loss of the left leg. Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers*, 59.

distinctly, what sums of money each particular person ought to have for that voyage.”³⁹ From this description one might understand the origins of popular and historical descriptions of “pirate constitutions.” In Esquemelin’s account some written agreements aboard pirate ships were not so much formal declarations of shipboard law but rather contracts between joint-venture capitalists, contracts which ensured an understanding of how funds should be distributed among the ranks of the pirate vessel. Even under this system of economic hierarchy the average seaman could stand to make a considerable amount of profit.⁴⁰

In the case of Wafer and his companions, the records do not show if any such written agreement existed, but from the evidence of what was confiscated with the men in April of 1688, it is apparent that each man was in possession of a more-or-less equal share from their adventure abroad. These possessions were separated into three sea-chests labelled with the name of their respective owner demarking the total treasure into three lots of private property. The equal division of the group’s assets allow for the speculation, validated by similar accounts by sources such as Dampier and Exquemelin, that the members of the expedition divvied the profit gained in the South Seas into some kind of equitable shares. No testimony exists to substantiate or refute this supposition (Wafer’s account understandably says nothing of any treasure, much less how he came by it and

³⁹ It is here that Exquemelin uses the term *no prey, no pay* to describe the chief motivation of pirate and privateer vessels. Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers*, 59.

⁴⁰ Henry Powell, in the introduction of the 1893 edition of Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers*, xxx.

how it was divided), but the circumstances strongly imply that the South Seas expedition upheld the pirate/privateer policy of profit sharing.

Decisions made during expeditions indicate the necessity of adapting to conditions of the environment as well as the internal politics of the membership of the venture, both key components of entrepreneurial enterprise. While adaptations concerning natural elements such as storms and unforgiving coastlines were a constant in both legitimate and illegal seafaring activity, decisions about the chain of command were considerably more pliable regarding privateering and piracy. Seamen aboard English military and merchant naval vessels had little recourse with which to remove incompetent or abusive officers.⁴¹ Any attempt to combat unfit leadership ran the risk of accusations of mutiny, a circumstance that rarely turned out in favor of the non-ranking seaman. This strictness within hierarchical order ensured a rigid adherence to the aims of the capitalist-state, and deterred the process of “willful individuality” that allowed for individual and collective decision-making required for illegitimate entrepreneurial enterprise.⁴²

In contrast to the rigid chain of command of legitimate commercial vessels buccaneers often created written articles that contained decisions about the leadership of the expedition. Frequently these decisions required voting.⁴³ A decision could be reversed if the chosen leadership proved to be incompetent or lacking in nerve. Dampier

⁴¹ Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blues Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 5.

⁴² Williams identifies the “willful individuality that was always present among the buccaneers,” when describing the change of command during the 1680 Panama expedition. Williams, *The Great South Seas*, 85.

⁴³ Exquemelin, *The Buccaneers*, 59-60.

provides an example of the process in the introduction of *A New Voyage Round the World*, by stating, “while we lay at the island of John Fernando (Juan Fernandez Island off the coast of Chile), Captain Sharp was, by general consent, displaced from being commander; the company not being satisfied with either his courage or behavior. In his stead captain Watling was advanced.” Watling died, and the party proceeded without a commander until “a great number of the meaner sort began to be as earnest for choosing Captain Sharp again into the vacancy as before they had been as forward as any to turn him out.” In Dampier’s view “abler and more experienced men” were opposed to returning Sharp to the position. The two opposing camps agreed to part company, voting to decide who would be awarded the expedition’s largest asset, the ship. Sharp’s supporters carried the vote. Dampier sided with the anti-Sharp contingent. However, no equivocation over the shares of the expedition occurred, the rules regarding profit sharing withstanding the division of the expedition and indicating that prearranged contracts about profit-sharing remained unbroken. It is difficult to imagine this type of collective decision-making regarding the leadership and objectives of a state-sponsored mission. The chain-of-command of such a mission would not have allowed decisions made on the premise of majority rule. Considering the times, the division of Sharp’s South Seas force was almost congenial, with both parties accepting their lot and moving on to future ventures. This event underscores the need for organized cooperation between members of the party, not so much as a product of high-seas honor and comradeship, but more to ensure that the main purpose of the venture—shared profit—was not jeopardized by a violent power grab by one individual or group.

Responses to unpredictable periods of deprivation and abundance further underscores the willingness of seagoing adventurers to weigh the risks against the benefits of a long-term expedition. Experienced seamen like Dampier, Wafer, Sharp, Cook, and Davis treated their nautical knowledge and determination as asset that could positively affect the outcome of the journey. Provisioning ships continued to be a source of anxiety for transoceanic expeditions. The haphazard nature of an extensive sea voyage required hourly attention to detail, much of which had to do with continually provisioning the ship in unfamiliar or hostile waters. This required constant adaptation to varied conditions of a transoceanic journey. The decisions and adjustments made by captains and crews are indicative of the kind of response to unforeseen factors present in all entrepreneurial ventures. Pirating expeditions could chart their course and plans-of-action as carefully as they desired, but man-made and natural setbacks were built into their overall expectations, creating a resigned response to the sometimes mundane but vital process of finding food and fresh water. The leadership of a pirate or privateering vessel were not often connected to a legitimate network of friendly harbors. Crews needed to either gather supplies on unclaimed territory or steal/trade it from Indians or European colonists. In the case of Wafer and his company, the Spanish sometimes anticipated their supply-stops and disrupted the food and water sources available. In 1687 the *Batchelor's Delight* landed on the coast of Peru to collect sheep and found that the "the Spainards had wholly destroyed or carried away the Sheep, Horses, and all other living creatures." A visit to a nearby island revealed the same activity by the Spanish. On the island of Juan Fernandez, a much visited haven for the expedition, dogs had been released to kill the

goats there. Wafer's response is matter-of-fact. "But we were content with killing there no more than we eat presently; not doubting but we should have found Sheep enough at Mocha, to victual the Ship."⁴⁴

The constant process of securing provisions could turn dire if the expedition came up empty-handed. This development potentially predicted severe consequences on the morale, and thus the success, of an expedition. Even under these circumstances the men made do with what was at hand. As Wafer reports, "In sailing along upon the coast we were sometimes put to it for Food as well as Water; and once were so Hunger-pinched that meeting with some Sea-crabs on the Coast, one of our Men, Mr. Smallbones, ate them raw and even Sea-weeds." Others in the party "Whose Stomachs would not serve for that Food," found a "gall'd Horse grazing in a little Spot at the foot of the Hill; which we presently kill'd, cut in pieces, and making a Fire with Sea-weeds, while 'twas hardly warm, leaving none, but carrying the very Guts aboard."⁴⁵ The necessity of eating whatever would sustain them through the leaner periods of the expedition reveal an attitude of adaptation to the often desperate circumstances the journey demanded.

Wafer did not keep a formal journal during his time in Panama and the South Seas, but absorbed much of his experience mentally, eventually producing a written record that allowed for his successors to employ the information he gathered and reduce the risk to their own expeditions. Dampier produced similar, and much more voluminous, information about specific regions collected during his three circumnavigations. Like

⁴⁴ Wafer, *A New Journey and Description*, 172-173.

⁴⁵ Wafer, *A New Journey and Description*, 166.

many land-bound entrepreneurial ventures, men like Wafer and Dampier compiled information and observations that highlighted successes, failures, pitfalls, and progress, thus producing a type of procedural business manual that could tempt and instruct future ventures.

The enormous dangers of seafaring presented the largest obstacle between organized private ventures and the potential profit they promised. Seafaring in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century was still a very hazardous practice involving numerous combinations of dangers such as the threat of storms, treacherous coastlines, uncharted territory, inhospitable indigenous populations, hostile seaborne enemies, disease, and unfavorable currents and winds. In his book about the eighteenth-century British Navy N.A.M. Roger claims that even on a sizable man-of-war the dangers of seafaring were ever-present.⁴⁶ These hazards were rarely taken for granted by the sailor.⁴⁷ Ample testimony to the dangers of sea travel and sailors' reaction to it exist in firsthand accounts. In 1704 Francis Rogers experienced a storm at sea where "the sky seemed all on fire and [all around] were such swift darting rays of lightening, flying in long bright vains, with inexpressible fury as was very frightful."⁴⁸ William Dampier substantiates the sometimes desperate feelings of vulnerability regarding the elements and environment during a transoceanic journey. In spring of 1688 Dampier was off the coast of Malaysia

⁴⁶ N.A.M. Roger, *The Wooden World: An Anatomy of the Georgian Navy* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1986) 46.

⁴⁷ Marcus Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blues Sea: Merchant Seamen, Pirates, and the Anglo-American Maritime World, 1700-1750* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 2.

⁴⁸ "The Journal of Francis Rogers," in *Three Journals of Stuart Times*, ed. Bruce Ingram (London, 1936) as seen in Rediker, *Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea*, 2.

in a locally made small-rigged vessel battling a storm. He and his crew were forced to make considerable adjustments to their vessel's sails and masts, while continually needing to bail water from its hull. As Dampier describes the evening of the 18th of May, "The sea was already roaring in a white foam about us; a dark Night coming on, and no land in sight to shelter us, and our little Ark in danger of being swallowed by every Wave." Dampier's gloom set in as he experienced "a lingering view of approaching Death, and little or no hopes of escaping it."⁴⁹ The storm abated that night and Dampier survived, but his account is testimony to the kinds of inner turmoil these forms of near-fatal circumstances caused Dampier and presumably most of the seamen who took up his profession.

Lionel Wafer also exhibits the type of hardship that accompanied far-flung profit-driven enterprises. As Wafer found himself separated from his main expedition on the Darien Peninsula in Panama with semi-hostile Indians as his guides, he realized that his hosts were intending to kill him in retribution for the perceived murder of other Cuna Indians by John Coxon's expedition. As Wafer states "they prepared a great pile of wood to burn us, on the 10th Day; and told us that we must trust to when the Sun went down; for they would not execute us until then."⁵⁰ Wafer and his company were saved by the Indian chief who forbade the execution and told his men to help Wafer find the rest of his party. The weather came into play two days later and "it fell a Raining as if Heaven and Earth would meet; which storm was accompanied with horrid Claps of Thunder, and

⁵⁰ Wafer, *A New Voyage*, 9.

Such flashes of Lightning, of a Sulpherous smell, that we almost stifled in the open air.” The storm triggered flash-floods causing the party “great Terror” and forcing them to quickly search for trees to climb to wait out the flooding. Wafer spent the night in the hollow of a tree “praying to God to spare his Life.” When he descended the following morning real despair set in as he called out to his companions and heard no reply. He “fell down as dead, being oppress’d both with Grief and Hunger.”⁵¹ He eventually reunited with his companions and the larger expedition, but the account is another example of the daily risks faced by those seeking adventure and profit by embarking on private sea and land expeditions.

Both Dampier and Wafer’s accounts of their travels relay episodes of deprivation and danger, but they also provide ample evidence of their efforts’ rewards. Beyond monetary incentives, long-distance private sea-faring expeditions stood to gain, at least temporarily, from a multitude of indigenous resources that a territory promised. Often access to these items required trade. Dampier, writing of the Atlantic island of St. Jago in 1670, describes it as “a good Port” where “when any Ships are here the Country People bring down their Commodities to sell to the Sea-men and Passengers, viz. Bullocks, Hogs, Goats, Fowls, Eggs, Plantains, and Coco Nuts, which they will give in exchange for Shirts, Drawers, Handkerchiefs, Hats, Waistcoats, Britches, or in a manner for any sort of Cloath, especially Linnen.” The locals would only sell cattle for “Money, or Linnen, or some other valuable Commodity.” However Dampier warns travelers to

⁵¹ Wafer, *A New Voyage*, 13-14.

beware “for they are very thievish and if they see an opportunity will snatch anything from you.”⁵² Wafer’s narrative describes many such encounters, but expeditions in the Pacific often provisioned their ships for scarcely inhabited regions that offered supplies without such specific trade customs. Wafer’s chief talent was his skill at observation, and his account of his cruise of the South Seas provides a catalogues of animal and plant life which certainly provided scientific categorization but, in a more practical sense, also exposed a bounty of foodstuffs. He also indicated where imported European staples flourished. On the coast of Peru the expedition acquired hogs, poultry, sugar, and wine as well as the medicinal element Jesuits bark, which is a primary ingredient in the prevention of malaria. At Peru’s river Ilo Wafer found: “Oil-Olive, Figs and Sugar, with Several Fruits; all which grow there very plentiful,” as well as “extraordinary good Oranges, of the China sort.” Wafer describes the Ilo River Valley as the finest he had ever seen in Peru.⁵³

Wafer after his South Seas Venture

Marcus Rediker explains the official and public attitudes toward for pirates permeating the seventeenth and eighteenth century by highlighting contemporary caricatures of pirates as lawless cutthroat savages.⁵⁴ Rediker also reveals the historical ambiguity of privateering in the early modern era, asserting that European nations had often used privately owned men-of-war to augment their navies, using privateers to

⁵² Dampier, *The Complete Works*, 35.

⁵³ Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*. 165.

⁵⁴ Marcus Rediker, *Villains of All Nations: Atlantic Pirates in the Golden Age* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004) 6.

disrupt supply lines and to drain their enemies' war-treasuries. Eventually English mainland colonies came to monopolize some Caribbean raw and manufactured materials such as Central American logwood used in dye-making. The Anglo-Spanish Treaty of Madrid of 1670 is an example of Spain's weakening power in the West Indies. In it Spain conceded the rights of full sovereignty to "all the lands, regions islands, colonies and dominions, situated in the West Indies or in any part of America" held by "the King of Great Britain and his subjects," at that time.⁵⁵ Jamaica offered an ideal location to launch the collective appropriation of Spain's overseas properties. Silver obtained by merchants and buccaneers assisted in reducing England's trade deficit with the Far-East, as Jamaica became the chief source of bullion in the British Atlantic. This enabled English colonists to buy imported goods from England as well as Spanish America, further strengthening commercial ties between mainland colonies, the West Indies, and Britain.⁵⁶

The lure of Spanish excesses in mineral and material wealth made the Caribbean the center of acute attention from the mid-seventeenth century onwards. As Glyndwr Williams explains, the Spanish treasure fleets that crossed the Atlantic each year firmly captured the public's imagination. A concerted effort by traders, privateers, and smugglers to tap into Spanish silver transport began in earnest, so that the Caribbean became the center of the struggle for trade and dominion between the seafaring realms of Europe, representing both a region of active commercial enterprise and a location where

⁵⁵ A.P. Newton, *The European Nations in the West Indies, 1493-1688* (London: 1933, 1966), 269-71.

⁵⁶ J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America 1492-1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006) 220, 224-226.

the galleons from Portobelo and the *flota* from Vera Cruz had to slowly and carefully navigate their way into open sea.⁵⁷ Spain's use of Portobelo as a waypoint when transporting mineral wealth increasingly tied the South Seas, which rested just beyond the Pacific Coast of the narrow Panamanian Isthmus, to Spanish Caribbean influence, luring those who wished to disrupt it (the English and Dutch) to establish permanent trade routes around Cape Horn. British proposals to do so date back to 1655 but were not formally attempted until 1669 when John Narborough tried an unfruitful reconnaissance mission to Chile. Influenced by Henry Morgan's invasion of Panama in 1671, forays across the Peninsula of Panama continued into the 1680s, Sharp and Coxon's expedition being one example. The goal was to seize Spanish ships on the Pacific side and sail to the coasts of Mexico, Peru, and Chile.⁵⁸ These expeditions represent the period in which Wafer operated as a surgeon on the *Batchelor's Delight*.

The treaty of Madrid officially ended the use of state-sponsored privateers against Spain. As a result, private vessels that seized or harassed Spanish ships were now considered buccaneer or pirate vessels. James II proclamation of 1687 against piracy included a concession that allowed privateers to turn themselves in for pardon within an allotted time-frame, suggesting an official understanding that privateers previously in the service of the crown would be given leniency based on their former service as long as they discontinued their piratical actions. The proclamation also suggests that Caribbean

⁵⁷ Williams, *The Great South Sea* 76-77.

⁵⁸ Williams, *The Great South Seas*, 81-82

piracy was so widespread in the final decades of the seventeenth century that the state was prepared to offer favorable terms to pirates who gave up their occupation.

The end of the seventeenth century brought in a period of change that affected participants in legitimate as well as illegitimate Atlantic economic activity. Writing about the early eighteenth century Rediker outlines the transition of official attitudes toward seamen working outside the legitimate naval and merchant networks. State power now claimed many of these men as outlaws to be exterminated, while in an earlier time they would have been regarded as a useful if sometimes disagreeable extension of the state.⁵⁹ By the first decades of the eighteenth century, as national claims were solidifying in the colonies, so were official efforts to capture and condemn those working outside of the official network of military and commercial interests. British policy toward private prize taking is emblematic of Rediker's broader assertion about the solidification of legal claims of the emerging European nation-state.

William Kidd, who began his career as a state-sponsored privateer commissioned to combat piracy against the East India fleet in the Indian Ocean, offers an example of an individual influenced by the waning days of piracy in the late seventeenth century. According to biographer Robert C. Ritchie, Kidd, who had recruited a crew made up in part by pirates in London and New York, quickly turned to indiscriminate marauding from his base in Madagascar. His career ended on the gallows at Wapping on the

⁵⁹ Rediker, *Villains*, 7. Rediker bases his assertion in part on an article from the *Boston News-Letter*, April 29, 1717; "Proceedings of the Court held on the Coast of Africa upon the trying of 100 Pirates taken by his Ma[jes]ties Ship Swallow"

Thames, and Ritchie speculates that Kidd may have been a victim of his silent partners' (a prominent group of Whig politicians) fear of damaged reputations. Ritchie also speculates that Kidd's execution may have been an effort to appease the Mughal emperor and the East India Company who saw any privateering as a threat to Indian Ocean commercial channels. Whatever the case, Kidd found himself up against a legal system that increasingly condemned any unsanctioned piratical activity, underscoring efforts to centralize authority and order in the British maritime world and to push the career of buccaneer into the category of anachronism.⁶⁰ These instances of pressure on buccaneering occurred in the Atlantic as well, as evidenced in Wafer's experience with accusations of piracy when he returned from the Pacific and was arrested on the Chesapeake Bay.

In his published narrative Wafer writes very little about his experience in Virginia during the time of the arrest, but what he does say leads to some speculation about his intentions had he not been delayed by the capture. In the last paragraph of his account Wafer claims:

I came down the River *de la Ware* as far as *Apokunnumy-creek*, with Capt. Davis, and John Hingson who was left with me on the Isthmus. There we carted our chests, with other goods, over a small neck of land into the *Bohemia-River*, which leads down the great Bay of *Chispeek* to Point-*Comfort* in *James-River* in *Virginia*. There I sought to settle. But meeting with some troubles, after a three years residence there, I came home for *England* in the year 1690.⁶¹

⁶⁰ Robert C. Ritchie, *Captain Kidd and the War against the Pirates* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989); See also: Richard Zacks, *The Pirate Hunter: The True Story of Captain Kidd* (New York: Hachette Books, 2003); William Hallam Bonner, *Pirate Laureate: The Life and Legends of Captain Kidd* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1947).

⁶¹ Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, 179.

If Wafer planned to “settle” in Point Comfort it is difficult to imagine what non-nautical occupation he would have adopted there. Point Comfort, with its advantageous proximity to Hampton Roads and the commerce of the Atlantic, offered a place where sailors and sea captains could mingle while organizing new voyages, close to the sea-traffic of Hampton Roads but somewhat apart from the authority of Jamestown. William Dampier resided there when Cook and Wafer met him for their journey to the Pacific, so it is reasonable to speculate that Wafer might have viewed the Chesapeake as a place to evaluate his position after the South Seas venture and look for new seaborne opportunities. His arrest curtailed this possibility and Wafer would never again experience the far-flung expeditions of his early career. However, his energy toward potentially profitable speculations did not diminish on his return to England. He used his earlier experiences to pursue his promotion of the colonization of the Darien Peninsula and to publish *A New Voyage and the Description of the Isthmus of America* (1699). With his published work, Wafer shifted from world of piracy and entered into an equally influential avenue of transatlantic economy, travel-narratives.

In the dozens of Colonial Office documents regarding the piracy charge against the men of the *Batchelor's Delight* Wafer's name is used only a handful of times. Most of the documents concerning the case refer to Captain Davis, as he was the senior officer of the three, while the others are identified with references such as “the others,” his accomplices,” and “the notorious pirates.” Complicating the case was a provision made in King James II's renewal of the proclamation of 1684 against privateering allowing for a

full pardon to privateers who surrendered within 12-18 months of the renewal date of January 22, 1687.⁶² Initially, the three proclaimed their absolute innocence. In his statement to the Virginia authorities, Wafer stated that he had spent the last seven years in Jamaica, trading periodically with the Spanish. Occasionally he encountered and traded with privateers but declined to take up the practice himself, continuing petty-trading activity until reaching Pennsylvania in the spring when he had made his way down to the Bay. Wafer goes so far as to claim he had never seen Davis before, although he admits to the acquaintance of John Hingson over the past four years, claiming Hingson as a small-venture trader like himself. Bearing witness against the three was a fourth man in the boat from which the men had been arrested, a slave named Peter Cloise who rowed the boat across the Chesapeake the day of their capture. Cloise said that he had known Davis for nine years, that the two others were close acquaintances of Davis, and that all three had spent the past several years plundering Spanish ships and towns.

This evidence may have persuaded the adventurers to seek out an advocate and change their strategy, adapting to conditions in the manner of most entrepreneurs. From this point on petitions on behalf of the men were carried out by Micaiah Perry, a Virginia lawyer, who very likely counseled his clients to ask for mercy under James II's privateering provision. Protection under the provision would have been valid if the three had initially admitted piracy to Rowe and Effingham, but because of their original denials

⁶² "The Duke of Albemarle to the Governor of Petit Guavos, 13 Sept. 1688," CO 1/65, Nos. 8, 8I-III, CO 138/6, pp. 132-134. "Answer to Lord Howard of Effingham to the petition of Edward Davies and Others, 18 Nov., 1690, CO 5/1305, No. 53.

the authorities in Virginia claimed that the provision could not be used. Obscuring any immediate decision was another later claim by the defendants that they had actually surrendered as pirates to Captain Allen of the H.M.S. *Quaker* and had received a certificate of immunity before their arrest by Rowe, but neither the certificate nor testimony by Allen ever surfaced.

Virginia's Governor Lord Effingham was particularly adamant that the prisoners should suffer the penalties for piracy, claiming that an initial confession would have saved them, but now, having lied, they faced the consequences of their actions. After nearly a year since the arrest, in a letter to the Lords of Trade and Plantations, Effingham outlined the episode claiming that during the first interview with the defendants he "offered them pardon if they would confess themselves as pirates; but they always refused. Then, on the 15th of August they sent me a petition claiming the King's pardon as pirates, surrendered under the Royal proclamation, which I refused, as they had declined it at first, but said I would forward their petition."⁶³ The petition to the King staved off trial proceedings, a development which Effingham did not like but felt obligated to honor because, "though I believe them to be great villains, I do not think it right to try them till the King's pleasure be known."⁶⁴ More adamant perhaps than Effingham was the commander of the anti-piracy squadron Sir Robert Holmes, who sent the King his own petition regarding Wafer and his comrades in December of 1690, after

⁶³ "Lord Howard of Effingham to Lords of Trade and Plantations, July 8, 1689," CO 5/1305, No. 15, CO 5/1358, pp. 50, 51.

⁶⁴ Lord Howard of Effingham to Captain Berry March 9, 1689," CO 5/1305, No. 3.

the three had returned to England, still awaiting a ruling. Holmes wrote, “I hear that Edward Davis and his accomplices, the notorious pirates, are now before you, and have petitioned for restoration of their goods. The Spanish Ambassador who was preparing proof against them is dead, so I think it my duty to inform you that the prisoners were proved guilty in Virginia of several piracies, that they denied the fact, and that they did not claim the royal pardon.” Holmes called for Wafer, Davis, and Hingson to be returned to Virginia for trial so that evidence compiled by the new Spanish Ambassador could be employed in reaching a guilty verdict for piracy.⁶⁵

The most damning (and disturbing) condemnation of Wafer and his companions comes from their arresting officer, Simon Rowe. In a letter from August of 1690, possibly out of frustration over the decision to allow the accused back to England, Rowe condemned his former prisoners by declaring, “If these men had had their due they would have been hanged before now, supposing the accounts of the negro who sailed with them to be true. They murdered Spaniards ashore, and burned their captured ships, men and all. In one Holland ship that they took they tied the crew to the gunwale and set her on fire.”⁶⁶ It is all but impossible to prove that these atrocities actually happened, but they indicate an attitude by at least a portion of the official authority that advanced a notion of abject terror when regarding piracy in the late seventeenth-century Atlantic World.

At the heart of the accusations against Wafer and his cohort was evidence of ill-gotten gains, three sea chests containing a substantial amount of Spanish silver plate,

⁶⁵ “Sir Robert Holmes to the King, Dec, 1690,” CO 5/1305, No. 60.

⁶⁶ “Extracts of a letter from Captain Rowe, August, 1690,” CO 5/1305 No. 51.

coins, and other goods. Wafer's chest held 74 pounds worth of silver plate and implements such as "seaven dishes, silver lace, some cupps broken." Also in Wafer's possession were "Three bags of Spanish money marked L.W., containing 1100 dollars or thereabouts."⁶⁷ Wafer's companions possessed similar inventories with Davis showing 106 pounds of silver items. John Hincant, possessed much of his silver in coinage; 800 pieces of eight.⁶⁸

The threat of losing their lives under the allegations of piracy certainly motivated Wafer and his companions to argue vigorously against the charges, but perhaps the main issue for all concerned was pecuniary. As the accused continued their stay in the Jamestown jail, their arguments increasingly involved the goods that had been confiscated by Captain Rowe and the Virginia authority. Petitions to the King and the Lords of Trade and Plantations consistently called for release and return of the men's goods rather than the sparing of their lives. The documents regarding their case suggest that mortal danger was less of a concern to the accused than the question of how they were going to support themselves upon release if their goods were not returned to them. Both the accused and their accusers stood to gain monetarily if they came out on the winning side of the crown's decision. Under King James' decree, Robert Holmes and his anti-piracy squad would be awarded full rights to any assets confiscated from captured pirate vessels, a provision that certainly would have motivated Holmes to pursue the prosecution of buccaneering (at sea and in colonial councils) with inspired vigor. Lord

⁶⁷ Joyce, "Lionel Wafer and His Times," in Hakluyt Edition of Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, xliv.

⁶⁸ Joyce, Wafer, *A New Voyage and Description*, xliv-xlv.

Effingham's documents supporting this prosecution indicate a desire to lay claim to the confiscated goods as well, perhaps in an effort to combine Holmes' effort at sea with colonial backing to allow for the sharing of profits. As colonial governor he was also concerned with preventing piracy due to the damage it inflicted on legitimate trade and diplomatic relations, particularly with Spain. From the accused point of view each of the chests contained considerable capital to allow them the possibility of embarking on new business ventures upon their release. At the least, the contents of the sea chests offered the chance for an extended period of comfort after a dangerous and extensive voyage to the South Seas.

The desire of the accused to retire from piracy is advocated by Micaiah Perry's petition to the Council. He writes "for some years the prisoners had been in the South Seas and having procured a small quantity of plate and other goods designed to spend the remainder of their days honestly and quietly."⁶⁹ The case rested, and was ultimately decided, upon this claim. A further petition made in Davis' name after the accused had returned to England describes how, with the appointment of Virginia's new governor Francis Nicholson in 1690, the three had reapplied for the restoration of their goods but received word that their property had been shipped to England. After repeated inquiries into the shipping order and the location of their goods the men suspected that the order "may have been a pretext to deprive us of our goods." The petition continues with the

⁶⁹ "Petition of Michaiah Perry on behalf of Edward Davies and others, prisoners in Jamestown Gaol, Virginia," CO/ 5/1305, Nos. 4, 4 I.

plea, “we beg for pardon and the restitution of our property.”⁷⁰ The plea for pardon appears to be slightly secondary to the primary objective of regaining their goods, as the emphasis on these petitions consistently rests on the claim for their property. The Lords of the Treasury now housed the properties, at the request of Effingham who, in a letter to Whitehall, traces the return of both goods and men to England in 1690. “The prisoners then sent a petition to the Council at Whitehall, and the Council of Virginia thereupon took bail of them to answer the charge against them in England and sent their goods to England, where they are now. I beg the treasury may take over the goods and acquit me of them, and that the prisoners, who are notorious pirates, may be tried.”⁷¹ The pardon and restoration of goods of Wafer and his companions relied on a decision between the King in Council and recommendations by the Treasury.

In January of 1691 an order of the King in Council requested that the case be presented to “the Spanish Ambassador and ascertain if he has any objection to the restoration of their goods to them.”⁷² This diplomatic sensitivity toward Spain indicates a recent desire to honor commitments established in the Treaty of Madrid, and inclusion of a Spanish voice in deciding the matter point to an evolved position by England regarding Spain that did not exist a generation earlier. It also indicates the use of improved Anglo-Spanish relations in providing extra legal leverage to those who wished to prosecute the accused. Combined with Robert Holmes’ insistence that a decision be put off until “the

⁷⁰ “Petition of Edward Davies and Others,” CO 5/1305, Nos. 52, 52 I.

⁷¹ “Answer of Lord Howard of Effingham to the petition of Edward Davies and others, Nov. 18, 1690,” CO 5/1305, No. 53.

⁷² Order of the King in Council, Jan. 12, 1691,” CO 5/1358, p. 148.

Spanish Ambassador may be informed that he may collect evidence in the Spanish Indies,” these considerations of Spain further underscore the shift away from the seventeenth-century disruption of Spanish interests and point to increased diplomatic relations between the two sovereignties.⁷³ While the Spanish Caribbean would still play a part in the formation of a British Atlantic, this relationship was no longer based on contentious or hostile relations defined by the age of privateering, but more by an understanding that unsanctioned piracy threatened to undermine the commercial interests of both nations equally.

The case continued into 1692 and was not fully resolved until 1693, the accused living under the threat of “a miserable fate in prison,” for much of that time.⁷⁴ But by the summer of 1691, the balance had shifted considerably in favor of the accused and officials in England, especially the Treasury, appear to have understood the men’s petitions from their somewhat ambiguous but ultimately persuasive point-of-view. The Lords of Treasury, in early 1691 stated “On the whole we are of the opinion that Davies and his companions did not comply with the conditions of the proclamation for surrender of pirates, but that they abandoned their ship and went to Virginia with the intention, in good faith, of surrendering, and therfor that they have a right to the goods taken from them.” One of the minutes from the Lords of Trade and Plantations from the summer of 1691 defers to the opinion of the Treasury by stating “On the petition of Edward Davies and others, the Lords report to the Queen that they concur with the Treasury in thinking

⁷³ “Sir Robert Holmes to the King, Dec. 1690,” CO 5/1305, No. 60.

⁷⁴ “Petition of Edward Davies and others to Lord of Trade and Plantations, July 13, 1691

that the prisoners did not comply with the provisions of the proclamation for surrendering themselves, but that their intention was to surrender to the Government of Virginia and that their goods therefor should be reckoned to be their property.”⁷⁵ A petition by Wafer and company in late 1691 details an agreement with Captain John Purvis to return part of the goods to them with the cost of shipping them subtracted from the total, indicating that at least part of the goods did not go to the Treasury.

Another petitionary document from February of 1692 demonstrates an agreement with the Anglican clergyman John Blair, proposer of a college in the Virginia colony, which allowed £300 of the recovered money to go to Blair for “the College at Virginia.”⁷⁶ An order of the King in Council, March 10, 1692, substantiates this agreement stating, “That the property of Edward Davis and others, pirates, be restored to them, except £300 value, with a fourth part of the amount in Captain Rowe’s hand, shall be devoted to building a College in Virginia or such charitable objects as the King shall direct.”⁷⁷ The last item regarding the case of the Wafer, Davis, and Hingson, is an order on the Minutes of the Council of Virginia for “all creditors on the estate of Edward Davies and his fellow-pirates to bring in their claims.”⁷⁸ This may be evidence that when the promised £300 reached Virginia, the council would pay the formally-accused’s outstanding debts before allotting the rest for the college project that became the College of William and Mary.

⁷⁵ “Minute of the Lords of Trade and Plantations, July, 1691,” CO 5/1358. p. 65, 66.

⁷⁶ “Petition of Edward Davies and other, Feb. 18, 1692,” CO 5/1306, No. 88.

⁷⁷ “Order of the King in Council, March 10, 1692,” CO 5/1358, pp. 150, 151.

⁷⁸ “Minutes of the Council of Virginia, Nov. 10, 1693,” CO 5/1405, pp. 835-838.

Available evidence for how and why the opinions of officials turned in favor of Wafer and his companions exists only in unspecific documentation. The replacement of Effingham with Francis Nicholson as Virginia's governor in 1690 seems to have allowed for the men's transport to England in order to petition the King directly and remove the governor and council of Virginia from the process. The goods followed, landing, at least in part, in the hands of the Treasury and making the matter fiduciary as well as judicial. Advocacy and persistent petitioning of the King in Council may have also played a significant part in the men's release. But the agreement that £300 go to the colony suggest that the King, the Treasury, the pirates, and the Virginia colony struck a deal that diverted pirate loot toward a colonial project and may have been the primary factor in the case's settlement. In this way the state complied with the use of "ill-gotten gains" to establish an institution intended for the betterment of the colony, an institution that intended to strengthen the Chesapeake region by providing it with firmer footing though institutionalized education. The £300 is a monetary signifier of how the colonial officials viewed Virginia's future on the eve of the eighteenth century. It is also symbolic of the relationship the colony established with its entrepreneurs. Wafer, Davis, and Hingson, after repetitive petitioning, regained their earnings, but only after the state had taken its cut.

Whether he chose to settle in Point Comfort practicing his original occupation of surgery, or move inland to try his hand at tobacco farming, or returned to England to take up any number of occupations there, the contents of Wafer's chest would have allowed him the temporary financial freedom to make independent decisions about his

professional and personal future. It is highly likely that after the episode in Jamestown Wafer would have been reluctant to continue on aboard pirate vessels, or even to return to sea at all. With the dubious distinction of having once been accused of piracy, his name was now known to Whitehall, Jamestown, and probably, due to the reach of Holmes' squadrons, English and Spanish colonial authorities along the Atlantic coast and the Caribbean. With this restriction of movement Wafer sought opportunities elsewhere, but continued to employ his earlier ventures in more legitimate enterprises that provided a significant outlet for his entrepreneurial energy. He wrote about and published his account, seeing the demand for knowledge about unexplored regions of the world as a chance to further capitalize off his experience as a pirate. As such he entered into a world that would continue to manufacture an anglicized image of colonists as they interacted with and gained control of imperial spaces.

Wafer remained in London until at least the middle of the 1690s while preparing *A New Voyage* for publication. While there, he used his knowledge of Panama to consult on the forming of a colony in Darien with both the King's Council and the organizers of the "Company of Scotland trading to Africa and the Indies." According Walter Herries, a chronicler and later critic of the company, Wafer had also spent time in consultation with private merchants in London organizing a plan to send vessels to Nicaragua for dye-wood. Wafer agreed to serve as a consultant for the Scottish company for two years, securing a £50 retainer and the promise of a £700 salary. He also agreed to delay the publication of his book (for twenty guineas) because the information might tempt similar schemes, and travelled to Edinburgh to meet with the company's board, or "Private

Committee.” He spent several days advising on conditions and potential on Darien and agreed to lead them on a dye-wood collecting expedition to Nicaragua that he claimed would defray the cost of the entire expedition.⁷⁹

What happened next exists under the complicated circumstances of the Darien fiasco itself. According to Harries, under the pretext that England had found out about the clandestine and distinctively Scottish plan, the company withdrew its obligation of £700 and only allowed Wafer 20 guineas—roughly £20. The company’s defenders claimed that the agreement for the £700 was only contingent upon the hiring of Wafer and that they had intended the meeting in Edinburgh to decide on his employment. The company realized that they had no need for Wafer because they had somehow acquired his original manuscript and now there was little he could offer them. The company’s version is that they gave Wafer £100 “first and last for his Pains and Expense, with which he was very well satisfied, and hath declared several times since that the Company dealt very honorably with him.”⁸⁰

James Knapton published Wafer’s *New Voyage and Description of the Isthmus of America* in 1699. A second edition was issued in 1704. The book became famous for its

⁷⁹ Walter Harries, *A Defence of the Scots Abdicating Darien: Including an Answer to the Defense of the Scots Settlement There* (London, 1700).

⁸⁰ *An Inquiry into the Causes of the Miscarriage of the Scots Colony at Darien, or an answer to...A Defence of the Scots abdicating Darien etc* (London, 1700) For a description and analysis of the Darien Scheme see John Prebble, *The Darien Disaster: A Scots Colony in the New World, 1698-1700* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), for the Darien’s scheme’s role in the Acts of Union of 1707 see Allan I. Macinnes, *Union and Empire: The Making of the United Kingdom in 1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), James Samuel Barbour, *A History of William Paterson and the Darien Company* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1907), Francis Russell Hart, *The Disaster of Darien: The Story of the Scots Settlement and the Causes of its Failure, 1699-1701* (London: Constable and Company, 1930).

adventure narrative, its early examples of ethnography, and its detailed descriptions of Panamanian flora and fauna. The record shows little of Wafer's life after the publication of his book but his biographer L.E. Joyce suggests that the surgeon-buccaneer lived near or frequented "Wapping, haunt of sea-rovers," along the banks of the Thames in London "Whatever his circumstances, he was in touch with both great men and buccaneers,"⁸¹ claims Joyce. Wafer's adventures had led him to the Caribbean, the South Seas, and the confines of a Jamestown jail. He used his energy and experience to capitalize off several enterprises that presented themselves, finding himself along a thin line between legitimate business ventures and maritime larceny. He sailed in the company of men with entrepreneurial instincts that circumnavigated the strictures of an emerging nation-state whose increasing reach would attempt to define and solidify the boundaries of its empire. But Wafer's character was also formed through the shift of the seventeenth-century Atlantic geo-political order, one which saw Spain decline in prominence and Britain, Holland, and France emerge to compete for the remnants of New World colonial projects.

The correspondence between colonial officials and Whitehall regarding the confiscated possessions of the three men is telling in that it puts a considerable amount of emphasis on material gain. The long months it took to settle the case symbolize the strengthening ties between England and her mainland colonies in regard to commercial and material expansion. Colonial officials superficially intended to use any proceeds from the captured treasure toward an improvement project in the colony, and the primary

⁸¹ Joyce, "Wafer and His Times," *New Voyage*, lxvi.

argument rested on whether the captured men had a legitimate claim to the goods. Rather than stand trial in Virginia, the men were eventually returned to London to await a decision, another indication of England's increasing reach when settling colonial problems. The fact that Wafer settled down to more legitimate occupations in England also shows a shift toward an attitude of conciliation on Wafer's part as he now participated in what T.H. Breen calls the "empire of goods," that would increasingly define the British Atlantic economy in the eighteenth century.⁸²

Lionel Wafer's activities in Virginia represent the commercially porous and legally inconsistent atmosphere of the late seventeenth century Chesapeake. Smuggling, piracy, and official corruption thrived as the colony struggled to find more stable and consistent footing in the British-Atlantic economy. Wafer operated in an environment on the fringe of New World potential, the North American Atlantic seaboard, a location which allowed the potential for legal and illegal activity from the Caribbean to the South Seas of the Pacific Ocean but had yet to fully realize the potential of the American interior. Wafer's world was one of seventeenth century seafaring commerce, often a reaction to changing power dynamics in the waning days of Spain's global influence, and his activity indicates not only the tentative grasp British interests held on their colony during Wafer's day but also the concerted, if sometimes clumsy and contentious, effort to regulate trade there.

⁸² Breen argues that the century leading up to the American Revolution saw a rise in Anglo-consumer culture in the colonies. This "empire of goods," allowed for the colonists to politicize items such as tea and cloth as material symbols of oppression. T.H. Breen, *Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

CHAPTER III

“PRIVATE ENDS UNDER A SHOW OF PUBLIC UTILITY,” WILLIAM BYRD ON VIRGINIA’S FRONTIER

The entrepreneur always searches for change, responds to it, and exploits it as an opportunity.¹

Peter F. Drucker

One element of the progression to legitimize commercial trade in Virginia, at least to outward appearances, came from its planter class. Planters took on multiple roles as slaveholders, landlords, large-scale tobacco farmers, militia leaders, investors, creditors, and public officials, with many holding long term positions in the House of Burgesses, the Governor’s Council, or both. As with the majority of Chesapeake society their commercial life was firmly tied to Atlantic networks of exchange, but unlike Wafer their interests were also intrinsically rooted in the Virginia land. Like Wafer they often operated at the fringe of commercial boundaries, not only on the maritime margins of the Atlantic coast, but also in the wilderness of the colonial backcountry. Their actions serve to illustrate an array of entrepreneurial endeavors over a broad geography. Planters took advantage of their status, influence, and wealth to launch legitimate and quasi-legitimate business ventures all the while cultivating the growth of slave labor in the colony.

¹ Peter F. Drucker, *Innovation and Entrepreneurship* (New York: Harper Business, 2006) p, 7.

The arduous yet often highly profitable business of tobacco planting allowed for the concentrated effort to direct and strengthen the Virginia economy in their favor, deeply obscuring the lines between political and commercial interests.¹ Planter entrepreneurs fit the model of war capitalists presented by Sven Beckert by claiming an advancement of the empire through means of the exploitation of land, labor and indigenous trade practices all while gaining personally through these practices.²

William Byrd, a goldsmith's son who emigrated from London, exemplified Virginia's frontier planter trader. He took advantage of numerous qualities of his personal characteristics as well as familial and business connections on both sides of the Atlantic to become one of the colony's most successful planters. He also angled his influence and experience into a lucrative position as a member of the Governor's Council, an upper

¹ Historians of colonialism have produced extensive scholarship about the Chesapeake planter elite. Recent works examine planter life through lenses that employ economy, law, gender, and race, drawing from extensive sources from colonial records and personal papers. Some recent works include: Emory G. Evans, *A Topping People: The Rise and Decline of Virginia's Old Political Elite* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009); Darrett B. Rutman and Anita H. Rutman, *A Place in Time: Middlesex County, Virginia, 1650-1750* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1986); Lorena S. Walsh, *Motives of Honor. Pleasure, and Profit: Plantation Management in the Colonial Chesapeake, 1607-1763* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Gavin Wright, ed., *Slavery and American Economic Development* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2013); T.H. Breen, *Tobacco Culture*: (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001); Anthony S. Parent, *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Gloria Lund Main, *Tobacco Colony: Life in Early Maryland, 1650-1720* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Douglas Bradburn, John C. Coombs, eds., *Early Modern Virginia: Reconsidering the Old Dominion* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013); John Mickle Hemphill II, *Virginia and the English Commercial System: Studies in the Development and Fluctuations of a Colonial Colony Under Imperial Control* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1985); Michal Jan Rozbicki, *The Complete Colonial Gentleman: Cultural Legitimacy in Plantation America* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003); Linda L. Sturtz, *Within Her Power: Propertied Women in Colonial Virginia* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Lorena S. Walsh, *From Calabar to Carter's Grove: The History of a Virginia Slave Community* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1997).

² Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A Global History* (New York: Vintage Press, 2014) xv-xvi.

advisory board, and Auditor General of the colony. His career reflects the ambiguous role of colonial officialdom at the end of the seventeenth century in Virginia, one that by today's standards might be seen as exhibiting extreme conflicts of interest. Byrd's career and activities consistently demonstrated core qualities of entrepreneurship: risk, innovation, planning, and profit as he applied them to his governmental and non-governmental roles. He particularly demonstrated the blurred lines between public and private interests in colonial political life. More ominously perhaps, Byrd etched his name into the cornerstone of the history of Virginia slavery, founding a legacy built on exploitive trade and labor practices that included both Indian and African slaves. During that time he was employed in some of the most powerful positions of government in the colony. Byrd thus is demonstrative of two sides of entrepreneurship in colonial Virginia, one that allowed for gradual expansion and economic diversity but one that also helped to advance plantation slavery and English hegemony among formally indigenous trade regions.

Byrd arrived in the Virginia colony at the age of seventeen, probably in 1669. His maternal uncle, Colonel Thomas Stegge, Jr., employed his nephew as an apprentice manager of his estate. Stegge had fallen into poor health and looked to Byrd as the appropriate heir to his fortune. Stegge died sometime between April and June 1670 after making a will which left all of his "lands, mesuages, tenements, etc. in Virginia and England to William Byrd, oldest son of the aforementioned John and Grace Byrd of

London, to him and his heir forever.”³ The will stipulated that Byrd remain under the tutelage of his aunt for a year or two so that he might not be tempted toward “evil instructions he shall receive from others.”⁴ Stegge also advised that Byrd come under the influence of Thomas Ludwell, the secretary for the colony, a longtime friend of Stegge’s and overseer of his last will and testament. Byrd’s aunt Sarah soon remarried a London merchant who resided often in Virginia, Colonel Thomas Grendon. It is difficult to determine definitively how much Sarah Stegge, Grendon, or Ludwell influenced the young planter, but the likelihood of tutelages, even if informal, by three prominent colonists involved in trade, planting, and government must have predisposed Byrd to the determined approach to business he showed throughout his career.⁵

Apart from planting, Byrd also seems to have taken up his uncle’s occupation in the Indian trade in earnest. Not long after his arrival Byrd made at least one journey to Indian trading villages in the wilderness west of his plantation. Journals of this time mention Byrd and a “great company” exploring the Appalachians as far as Totero village, where Salem, Virginia sits today.⁶ Byrd continued the efforts of the preceding generations of European explorer/traders by exploiting and augmenting the network of ancient Indian trails that lined the Appalachian mountain range. Sporadic expeditions by earlier colonists to locate consistent trading opportunities during the middle of the

³ *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XXXV (July 1927), 228.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Pierre Marambaud, “William Byrd I: A Young Virginia Planter in the 1670s,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, April 1973, Vol. 81, No. 2, 132-133.

⁶ Clarence Walworth Alvord and Lee Bidgood, *The First Explorations of the Trans-Alleghany Region by the Virginians, 1650-1674* (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1912) 77.

seventeenth century provided some knowledge of the peoples, geographies, flora and fauna of the Virginia piedmont. The Ochaneechee path particularly represented a potentially vital avenue for the movement of goods, trade, and people. Ethnologists identify the trail as prehistoric, leading from present day Petersburg to an area on the banks of the Roanoke River where Clarkesville is located today.⁷ The Ochaneechee Indians acted as midpoint traders for more distant networks of Indian trade.⁸ Byrd's early efforts extended trails like the Ochaneechee to push trade beyond its piedmont confines and connect them to Catawba and Cherokee trading networks west of the Virginia Piedmont.⁹

Apprehension by many would-be traders and settlers prohibited any substantial rush to exploit western trade and land until around 1680. Many English colonists feared the inhabitants of the colony's wilderness which included the Tomahitan, Iroquois, Tuscarora, Cherokee, and Catawba Indians. Little was known about the temperament and cultural difference of the peoples of the Piedmont and beyond who frequented the network of paths into the unknown regions west of the fall line. Lack of knowledge about the expanse of North America also led many to believe that the Spanish were only a few hundred miles west of the Atlantic colonies. Personal and financial risk deterred most

⁷ William E. Meyer, "Indian trails of the Southeast," *Bureau of American Ethnology, 42nd Annual Report* (Washington, D.C., 1928), 775.

⁸ April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2004) 27-26.

⁹ Alan Vance Briceland, *Westward from Virginia: The Exploration of the Virginia-Carolina Frontier, 1650-1710* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1987) 197-198. See also David Hackett Fischer and James C. Kelly, *Bound Away: Virginia and the Westward Movement* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2000).

attempts to penetrate and establish trade beyond the fringes of the frontier. Limited understanding about the breadth of the western wilderness confined settlement and trade primarily to the eastern portion of the colony.

By the 1670s, however, several expeditions to discover the extent of the wilderness by explorers such as Thomas Batts and Robert Fallum allowed Englishmen to traverse to the western slopes of the Appalachians, bringing into view what is now Kentucky, West Virginia, and Northern Georgia. Explorer Gabriel Arthur, between July 1673 and July 1674, traversed portions of South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Tennessee, and Kentucky, travelling as far southwest as Mobile Bay. Only a few decades earlier Tidewater settlers imagined the colony as hemmed in between the Atlantic Ocean and a narrow wilderness inhabited by hostile Indians and ending in Spanish America. In the late seventeenth century more English colonists saw the entrepreneurial potential of westward expansion that conceivably offered as many opportunities as dangers.¹⁰ Byrd, already at an advantage due to his uncle's influence on the frontier of the colony, adapted elements of his business strategy to include the plantation economy of the Chesapeake and toward Indian trade.

Byrd demonstrated his increasing role in western trade and Indian slavery by the 1670s. By 1672 he had advanced his authoritative and social status in the colony by becoming a captain in the militia of Henrico County and marrying Mary Filmer, daughter of a former member of the governor's council. Two years later Mary gave birth to a boy,

¹⁰ Briceland, *Westward*, 34.

William Byrd II. Little is known about the elder Byrd's personal and business affairs during the 1670s. One of the earliest surviving records of Byrd's business transactions during this period involves an Indian boy sold to a resident of Henrico County. This states, "Know all men by these presents that William Byrd have bargained and sold unto Thomas Harris one Indian boy about four years old commonly called Taythee, to him the said Thomas Harris his heirs forever."¹¹ This is perhaps the first surviving record of a business transaction by Byrd after his arrival in the colony, and while his business correspondence of the 1680s and 90s would involve the subject of African slavery numerous times, this particular source offers two defining elements of Byrd's involvement with Indian trade and slavery. On one hand, the sale of Taythee to a colonist demonstrates the desire for labor from sources other than indentured servants who could be expensive to transport and support and whose servitude required a release from service after several years. Indians served their masters until their death and often their children became the property of the master.¹² Byrd's transaction is indicative of the desire to exploit cheaper means of labor through western sources rather than import labor as indentured servants. The letter acts as a reminder of the exploitation of labor which would come to define the Virginia economy for almost two centuries, Taythee is symbolic of the motivation of Virginia planters, merchants, and entrepreneurs; the desire for profit.

¹¹ Henrico County Records, I, 134, November 17, 1673. Accessed from Pierre Marambaud, "William Byrd I," 133.

¹² C.S. Everett, "'They shalbe slaves for their lives': Indian Slavery in Colonial Virginia," in *Indian Slavery in Colonial America*, Alan Galloway ed., (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009) 76.

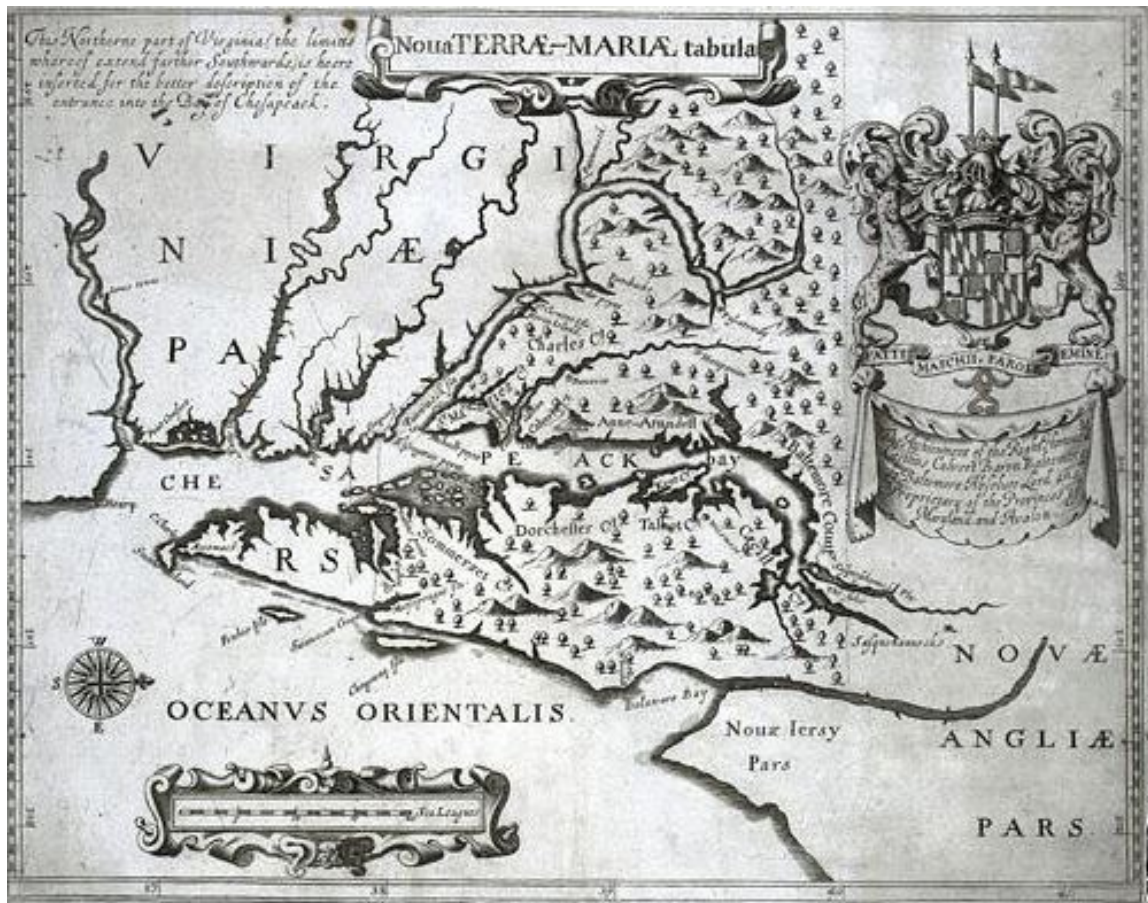


Figure 2. *Nova Terrae-Mariae Tabula*, John Ogilby, (London 1671). Accessed from the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Online Collection, <http://mesda.org>, loan courtesy of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

The records do not indicate how Taythee came into Byrd's possession but C.S. Everett suggests that Byrd successfully tapped into the well-worn trading paths of Indians west of the fall line who transported, among other "exotic cargo," human beings.¹³ Substantiating the extent of Byrd's influence is a letter he received in 1675 from Father Jacques Marquette, the French Jesuit explorer. Marquette wrote to Byrd from the approximate

¹³ Everett, "They shalbe slaves for their lives," 78.

vicinity of present day Memphis explaining how he had encountered “barbarians who I believe are accustomed to have intercourse with Europeans. As however I can get no information from them, I should be most grateful if you, whoever you are, and whatever be your latitude and longitude, would you inform me what these barbarians are.”¹⁴ The letter confirms the far-reaching influence of Byrd by the middle of the 1670s, and it is possible that the letter reached Byrd through Cherokee carriers who frequented the trails headed east over the Smokey and Appalachian mountain ranges.¹⁵ Access to extensive networks of trade moving in multiple directions all the way to the Mississippi River allowed for greater availability of Indian goods, the most desirable being beaver and otter pelts and bear and deer skins.¹⁶ By the late 1670s Byrd had become the most prominent European purveyor of this trade in Virginia. He employed around fifteen men to lead caravans of a hundred packhorses to distances of over four hundred miles. These caravans would connect to the distant networks that stretched to the Mississippi River.¹⁷ Bacon’s Rebellion curtailed his business opportunities in the latter half of the decade, although eventually they offered potential for new avenues to build his prominence in business and government.

¹⁴ *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XXVI (July 1918), 313.

¹⁵ Pierre Marambaud, “William Byrd I,” 134.

¹⁶ Pierre Marambaud, *William Byrd of Westover: 1674-1744*, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1971) 16.

¹⁷ “Letter of William I to Lane and Perry, May 10th, 1686,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, XXV (1917), 51-52.

William Byrd and Bacon's Rebellion

In 1776 Nathaniel Bacon led a militia in unauthorized reprisals against Indian attacks on farms and settlements on the piedmont frontier. While scholarly interpretations understandably rest heavily on class and ethnic tensions, historians have emphasized commercial relationships less thoroughly in their studies. A focus on the actions and rhetoric of Byrd's partner in the fur trade and the leader of the revolt, Nathaniel Bacon, underscores the importance and immediacy of the issue of Indian trade during the rebellion. The violent events of the rebellion started over the complaint by Doeg Indians of unfair trade practices by an English planter and merchant, Thomas Mathew. In retaliation a group of Doegs stole hogs from the offending trader. Englishmen and allied Indians chased the Doegs up the Potomac, caught them, and killed or brutally beat the offenders. The ensuing cycle of revenge and retaliation inadvertently brought in other Indian trade partners such as the Susquehannocks and eventually the established middlemen of English-Indian trade, the Occoneechees.

Historians have produced works regarding the causes, events, and results of Bacon's rebellion since the beginning of the eighteenth century.¹⁸ But these studies offer dramatically varied interpretations. The subject is still a rich source of analysis for modern scholars interested in colonial authority and popular political action in late seventeenth century British North America. Ample primary sources from colonial and

¹⁸ The first historical narrative of the rebellion was in Robert Beverley's *The History and Present State of Virginia* Louis B. Wright, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947) p. 74-85. John Daly Burk painted Bacon as a martyr for liberty in the early nineteenth century, a view that would take hold again in the middle of the twentieth century, John Daly Burk, *History of Virginia from its First Settlement to the Present Day* (4 vol. Petersburg, Va.: Petersburg Press, 1804-16), 2: 55-94.

royal officials as well as formal complaints by Bacon's supporters in the frontier counties, referred to as grievances, allow for a fairly clear picture of the events of the uprising. The conflict also allows for the easy, if not exactly historically helpful, identification of a protagonist and an antagonist in the form of Nathaniel Bacon and Governor William Berkeley, their roles depending on the scholar studying them. Much of the historiography focuses primarily on the rebellion as a conflict between Englishmen, analyzing it as a battle waged by freemen and freeholders against the presiding colonial government whom Bacon and his supporters saw as not offering proper support against Indian incursion.

Interpretations from the middle of the twentieth century to the present emphasize class and ethnic divisions, rather than commercial instability, as a primary motivator of the rebellion. As more men completed their servitude and gained land, or at least became tenants, their stake in the success of the frontier counties grew. As freemen they took on a tax burden, mainly from land taxes or taxes on the tobacco they grew. Most historians writing on the subject agree that planters and merchants, along with small farmers, felt the pinch of taxation. Scholars also agree that the complaints revolved around the allocation of tax revenue toward the protection of the frontier region and specifics about how to undertake that protection. But beyond this point the scholarly interpretation divides. Earlier twentieth century historians asserted a point of view that held Bacon and his followers up as a heroes and martyrs for individual liberty, likening Bacon to Virginia's most famous revolutionary, Thomas Jefferson. This explanation underscored prevailing midcentury notions of public autonomy versus tyrannical central authority. In

the minds of Baconian scholars, Governor Berkeley represented the central authority that resonated out from Jamestown and was backed by a stringent Stuart tyranny in England. As a result, or perhaps as a preconceived agenda, mid-century scholars made direct comparisons between Bacon's motives and the motives of colonists in the American Revolution which began conveniently exactly 100 years after the conflict.¹⁹ These theses omit the facts that reveal Bacon as an early proponent of Indian removal and slavery, perhaps because these qualities inconveniently complicated a trending emphasis on liberty and freedom.

Later historians reevaluated the conflict away from the simplified view of liberty versus tyranny analyses. Bernard Bailyn saw the rebellion as a symptom of England's disorganization over its colonial projects in the seventeenth century. Edmund Morgan supported Bailyn's view by showing incompetency on the part of planters and colonial officials in keeping discontented servants and freemen from actively demonstrating their dissatisfaction.²⁰ Warren Billings refocused the discussion on taxation and debt upon the

¹⁹ The most notable of the pro-Bacon works is Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker's *Torchbearer of the Revolution: the Story of Bacon's Rebellion and its Leader* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940). Wertenbaker echoed the assertions of John Daly Burk written nearly 150 years earlier, setting up Bacon as the hero/martyr against a tyrannous William Berkeley. Historian of colonial Virginia Brent Tartar identifies flaws in Wertenbaker's thesis, claiming that his assertions contradict the primary sources he used and calling the work "one of the worst books on Virginia that a reputable scholarly historian ever published." Brent Carter. "Bacon's Rebellion, the Grievances of the People, and the Political Culture of Seventeenth-Century Virginia," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 119, No. 1 (2011), p. 6. A work that provides a midcentury example of a thorough narrative of events and employs numerous primary sources without heavy interpretive license is Wilcomb E. Washburn's *The Governor and the Rebel: A History of Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1957). Washburn especially credits the rebels' discontent over the colony's Indian policy as a chief cause for the conflict, p. 163. See also Stephen Saunders Webb, *1676: The End of American Independence* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984).

²⁰ Brent Tartar references Bailyn and Morgan from Bernard Bailyn, "Politics and Social Structure in Virginia," in James Morton Smith, ed., *Seventeenth-Century America: Essays in Colonial History* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1959). p. 90-115, and Edmund s. Morgan, *American Slavery*,

small farmers and landless in the frontier counties, eventually claiming that contrary to earlier views of Jamestown as a capital with considerable central authority, it was actually the county seats and parishes that had gained power and used it in semi-autonomous ways that Bacon's supporters saw as oppressive. Billings emphasized the local control of minority elites, a petty-aristocracy, who through marriage, familial patronage, and support of highly motivated (entrepreneurial) immigrants like Byrd managed to assert considerable local authority in political and economic matters.²¹ Brent Tartar, who undertook a thorough examination of county grievances leading up to the rebellion, supports Billings's studies by identifying a white landholding elite who worked to ensure political inclusion only to those who participated in the building of the colony through land and property ownership.²² Grievances prior to the rebellion reveal a growing discontent over the permanence and power of the House of Burgesses, who could charge up tavern bills and vote for allowances at the taxpayers' expense. The primary theme of the grievances was that elites appointed by the Governor to positions as local magistrates, sheriffs, and assemblymen demanded unfair taxation from a populace that was politically excluded based on their economic position.²³

Like Rice, I argue that the changing landscape of Indian trade relations compounded these tensions. Berkeley had expended considerable revenue and energy

American Freedom (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975) 215-249. Carter, "Bacon's Rebellion," *VMHB*.

²¹ Warren Billings, "The Causes of Bacon's Rebellion: Some Suggestions," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 78, No. 4 (Oct. 1970) p. 3.

²² Tartar, "Bacon's Rebellion," *VMHB*, 15.

²³ Tartar, "Bacon's Rebellion," *VMHB*, 21.

over the preceding decades to secure a tentative but growing trade partnership with several Indian groups. An influx of small-land-holding frontier farmers around the fall line disrupted these delicate agreements. In the 1660s and 70s the growing population of small farmers found themselves increasingly on the fringes of the colony, feeling under protected from the threat of Indian raids. The small farmer cared little about lucrative trade networks with Indians outside the Chesapeake, they wanted individual financial and physical security as they eked out an existence from the land. Taxation and poor military protection threatened that security. Adding to this tension was the recent arrival of the Susquehannock Indians along the Maryland shore of the Potomac, resettling south of their homelands in order to escape hostilities from the Iroquois. Farmers, merchants, wealthy planters, Indians, and county officials, all seemed to vie for political and economic power in a struggle over limited land and resources.²⁴

Byrd, whose livelihood depended upon a delicate balance between his relationship with his Indian trading partners, his neighbors in the frontier counties (including Bacon), and his associates in Jamestown and London, took advantage of the motives and attitudes regarding Bacon and his supporters' actions. As an entrepreneur, Byrd tread skillfully around the political and economic implications of the fight in order to protect his business partnerships and assets. The struggling frontier trade goods market provided the economic as well as the physical backdrop for much of the conflict, and

²⁴ James D. Rice, *Tales from a Revolution: Bacon's Rebellion and the Transformation of Early America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) 15. Washburn, *The Governor*, 162-163.

Byrd appears to have used carefully calculated maneuvers to capitalize off of social, political, and economic instability.

Several instances in the coming months demonstrate the importance of trade as a root cause of hostilities between the insurrectionists, Jamestown, and Indians. Bacon, a brooding, melancholy frontier fur trader, complained that Berkeley's Indian trade supplied firearms to frontier natives, proving, "so fatal to these parts of the world, that I fear we shall be all lost for this commerce." Bacon claimed that Berkeley "monopolized a trade with the Indians and granted license to others to trade," for a "small and sordid gain."²⁵ Bacon could be accused of much the same motives. He employed the Occoneechees to pursue and kill displaced Susquehannocks, but when Posseclay, the Occoneechee chief, would not surrender a large amount of beaver skins plundered from the Susquehannocks, Bacon turned his anger on his allies. A confused massacre ensued resulting in Englishmen killing women, children, and elderly Indians. The battle destroyed one of the most important trade centers in the south. Bacon's men looted the village and left the dead unburied.²⁶

Bacon seemed intent on plundering the trade goods of many of the Indians he encountered. On the York River his band pursued a group of Pamunkey Indians led by their Queen, Cockacoeske, who "had never at any time betrayed or injured the English." Cockacoeske rightly feared violence and as an appeasement measure left "behind all her

²⁵ Rice, *Tales*, 39-40. Charles M. Andrews, ed., *Narratives of the Insurrections, 1675-1690* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915) 51-52.

²⁶ Rice, *Tales*, 46-48.

goods and Indian corn vessels &c. and as much as she could to decline all occasion of offending the English, who she so much loved and revered.” These goods included “Indian matts, basketts, matchcotes, parcels of Wampampeag and Roanoke...in bags, skins, Furs, Pieces of linen, broad cloth, and divers sorts of English goods (which the Quenn had much value for).”²⁷ Bacon managed to catch a Pamunkey woman and used her as a guide to try and find the Queen and her followers. The woman led the band astray paying for it with her life. Cockacoeske realized how important Indian truck was to Bacon and his men and hoped to buy time by distracting her pursuers in order to escape their wrath.²⁸

Bacon’s justification of violent acts against Indians stemmed from his view of friendly and advantageous Indian trade relationships as a farce, and that groups such as the Pamunkeys “have been for many years enemies to the King and Country, Robbers and thieves and invaders.” He retaliated for Berkeley’s dealings with the Indians “that buy and sell our blood,” with merciless treatment of friendly and hostile Indian alike.²⁹ Trade lay at the heart of his justification for and implementation of warfare with the Indians, using a perceived conspiracy as catalyst for action, and punishing Indians with a disruption, and usually the wholesale theft of, their goods. When the goods did not

²⁷ “Commissioners’ Narrative,” in *Narratives*, ed. Andrews.

²⁸ Oberg, ed., “The Commissioners” in *Samuel Wiseman’s*, 158-159. For Cockacoeske see, “Helen C. Rountree, “The Termination and Dispersal of the Nottoway Indians of Virginia,” *VMHB*, Vol. 95, No. 2 (Apr., 1987), p. 193-214; Gregory A. Waselkov, ed., Peter H. Wood, *Powhatan’s Mantle: Indians in the Colonial Southeast* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006); Clara Sue Kidwell, “Indian Women as Cultural Mediators,” *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (Spring, 1992), p. 97-107.

²⁹ Rice, *Tales*, 79. “Proclamations of Nathaniel Bacon,” *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 1 (1893-94), p. 55-61.

suffice Bacon contented himself with taking captives, another potential trade item in the form of slaves.

Interpreting Byrd's intentions during the period of revolt is full of difficulties. Little written evidence of his direct participation exists, just scant glimpses of an individual affected by and possibly manipulating the events in his favor. The official report by the commission sent to investigate the rebellion names him specifically as an instigator, present with Bacon when he launched his plan to recruit soldiers along the James to join him. But later accounts of his involvement throughout the spring and summer of 1676 portray him either as Bacon's willing accomplice or his prisoner. Like much of Byrd's career, the ambiguity of his actions often allowed him to parry culpability, and land on firmer and more profitable ground. Post-rebellion evidence definitively demonstrates that Byrd actively pursued means to protect himself from legal action, ingratiating himself with the investigating commissioners and employing legal representation.³⁰ He presumably took these measures to protect his family's name as well as his business interests.

Regarding the night that Bacon decided to launch what would become the rebellion, the commission's narrative reads, "Now this man being in the company with one Crews, Isham, and Bird (sic), who growing to a height of Drinking and making the Sadness of the times there (sic) Discourse, and the fear they all lived in, because of the Susquehannocks who had settled a little above the Falls of the James River, and

³⁰ Marambaud, "William Byrd I," *VMHB*, p. 144-145.

committed many murders upon them.” Both Bacon and Byrd lost men to these raids.³¹ James Crews, Bacon’s best friend, appears to have been the most persuasive of the group, convincing Bacon to ply potential recruits with rum. After gaining their backing the initial conspirators, including Byrd, resolved to support Bacon to take revenge upon the Indians with or without the Governor’s blessing.³²

There are problems with this account, however. The events of the rebellion took place long before the commission completed their report, so that hearsay enters into the narrative in a time with little means of recording events except through fallible human memory. The amount of time that elapsed between the start of the insurrection and the commissioner’s arrival in Virginia equaled almost a year. The commission carried with it a definite agenda, one that portrayed Bacon as a traitor and Berkeley as having lost control of the king’s subject, calling for increased authority in the colony and punishment for the rebellion’s leaders. The report did little to conceal these biases that read as hasty condemnation, particularly of Crews and Bacon. With flaws in the evidence, little emerged about the intentions, or even the participation of Byrd in the first stages of Bacon’s attacks on the Indians, although we do know that he held the rank of captain in the militia and may have been an added influence in attracting the soldiers to the cause. The fate of each of the four named in the commissioner’s report is telling, however. Bacon died of illness in October of 1776, probably of typhus. Henry Isham, a planter from Charles City County, returned to England and appears to have been exonerated of

³¹ “William Berkeley to Thomas Ludwell,” April 1, 1676, CO 1/36, f 68.

³² Oberg, “The Commissioners’” in *Samuel Wiseman’s*, p. 146-147.

involvement in the rebellion. James Crews was hanged in January, 1677.³³ Byrd continued his business activity and eventually became the second largest landholder in the colony.³⁴

Scholarly attention about Byrd's involvement in Bacon's rebellion necessarily relies on scholarly speculation. Pierre Marambaud, offers an interesting theory as to why Byrd might have worked to distance himself from Bacon after initial hostilities arose. Bacon, who partnered with Byrd in the fur trade before the rebellion, became a burgess in the Virginia assembly in June, 1676. The "June Assembly," made up of disgruntled colonial outliers, looked to Bacon as their legislative leader. Bacon called for a new Indian policy in no uncertain terms. He stated, "Our design [is] not only to ruin and extirpate all Indians in general but all manner of trade and commerce with them."³⁵ Byrd, a trader with strong connections to established Indian trade networks, had to tread a very careful ground. As a captain in the militia he deferred to Bacon's rank of colonel which he could use as his defense when explaining his actions during the rebellion. On the other hand he stood to lose a large part of his business if Bacon's proclamation against the Indians came through. There is also little doubt that Byrd felt the pressure, like so many others, of Indian violence, having witnessed it many times in his career in Virginia while also taking part personally in retaliations. All of these motivations complicate the picture of a frontier planter and Indian trader during the late seventeenth century, allowing us to

³³ Rice, *Tales*, p. 101-102, 207; Oberg, "The Commissioners'" in *Samuel Wiseman's*, p. 246 n. 10, 11.

³⁴ Emory G. Evans, *A Topping People: The Rise and Decline of Virginia's Old Political Elite 1680-1790* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009) p. 15.

³⁵ Nathaniel Bacon, "Proclamations of Nathaniel Bacon," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Jul., 1893), p. 55-63.

understand that Byrd had to consider his family's personal safety as well as his business interests while simultaneously trying to keep in line politically to ensure security in the future. These considerations often worked at cross-purposes.³⁶

All of this might offer some insight into Byrd's evasive and arguably self-serving actions after the rebellion ended. He soon ingratiated himself with the royal commissioners by testifying against two men who had uttered "several scandalous words tending very much to the prejudice of the right honorable his Majesty's commissioners, and the peace and quiet of this country."³⁷ The men were fined 1,000 pounds of pork for the provisioning of the 1,100 soldiers that accompanied the commission. Adding to his prestige he became a member of the House of Burgesses for Henrico County, taking Bacon's seat. He tellingly left the following year for England under speculation that damning testimony involving him would emerge during the commissioner's inquest. Augustine Warner, a former Speaker in the Assembly, accused Byrd of readily assisting Bacon during the raid of his house in September of 1676 and taking £845 of goods and causing £1,000 of damages. Byrd's attorneys claimed that he was Bacon's prisoner at the time.³⁸ The commissioners sided with Byrd, possibly because of the lateness of the petition but also perhaps because of Byrd's earlier cooperation with them. Whichever is true, Byrd would have played toward self-interest by supporting Bacon when

³⁶ Pierre Marambaud, "William Byrd I: A Young Virginia Planter in the 1670s," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 81, No. 2 (April, 1973) p. 131-150.

³⁷ Hening, *Statutes*, II, 554-555.

³⁸ Marambaud, "William Byrd I," *VMHB*, 141-143.

advantageous to him, but denying culpability in the aftermath, the primary witness who could have shed light on his involvement, Bacon, being dead.

One reason that Byrd may have played both sides of the field involved the issue of Indian slaves. Again the planter had to navigate the environment of colonial hostility carefully. As suggested earlier, Byrd probably did not want to see his Indian trading partners annihilated completely, but controlled raiding by frontier militia's such as Bacon's would allow for the taking of captives which produced slaves for a region in considerable need of labor. Raiding also created instability for competitors of his trade networks. A 1680 letter from Nicholas Spencer, President of the Council, accuses Byrd of willfully participated in the killing of Indians and the capturing of women and children. In the letter Spencer describes how Colonel Abraham Wood, a long time trader who worked toward diplomatic trade arrangements with the area's Indians, negotiated a meeting with chiefs of several towns. The meeting failed to materialize because of hostile actions due to "clandestine designs of some Indian traders, who wished to upset this arrangement of Colonel Wood for their own ends." Spencer goes on to name Byrd as the primary actor in these disruptions, stating, "When we consider Captain Byrd killed seven surrendered Indians and took away their wives and children prisoners, on the mere suspicion that they were assassins of our people, we can hardly wonder at the failure of the treaty." Spencer implies that Byrd actively sought to undermine peace agreements

between Wood (a competitor), frontier Indians, and the colonial government. At the same time Byrd took captives with the probable intention of using or selling them as slaves.³⁹

As an opportunistic entrepreneur, Byrd's efforts to control as much of the Indian trade as he could continued into the 1680s. In early 1683 he created a plan, with the Assembly's backing, for monopolizing Indian trade. The petition to the Board of Trade reads:

If he may have the sole Indian trader to the exclusion of all others from trade or truck with the Indians, he engages (1) to send out no persons to trade with them but such has been given security for good behavior; (2) to take all possible pains to heal breaches between different tribes and to secure payment of the King's tribute; (3) as soon as peace is concluded between the Government and the Senecas, to discover the great tract of land to the westward of the mountains and report thereon to the Governor; (4) to pay one hundred pounds a year to the King, provided that he have liberty to transport all commodities purchased of the Indians to England.⁴⁰

Although the Board of Trade did not approve the proposal it still revealed the lengths to which Byrd would go to protect and expand his influence in the Indian trade. It called for only reliable and trustworthy agents to participate in trade, encouraged the exploration of new trading regions and promised tribute from Indians as well as duties on profits gained from the regulations. Officials could read these proposals as beneficial to the expansion of the colony's economy and the royal revenue but they also advantaged Byrd's western trade enterprises as well.

³⁹ "Letter from Nicholas Spencer to Lord of Trade and Plantations, March 18, 1680," CO 1362, Vol. 10 (1677-1680), p. 498-499.

⁴⁰ "Mr. Byrd's Proposal for Regulating the Indian Trade," CO 980, Vol. 11 (1681-1685) p. 400.

On May 4th, 1683 the Council of Virginia wrote to the Lords of Trade and Plantations stating: “The inhabitants of this country are mostly extremely poor; their only commodity, tobacco, having of late years yielded them little, while their poverty inclines them to listen to all suggestions, however foolish, which are insinuated into them by factious persons, who mask their private ends under a show of public utility.”⁴¹ The letter blames the recent overproduction of tobacco for the “present low state of the inhabitants of Virginia” calling for regulations on planting seasons in Virginia, Carolina, and Maryland, and use of Virginia generated revenue for a garrison of sixty soldiers. The colony would employ the garrison to deter “all disorders ashore,” raised through the recruitment of colonial men whose officers were gentlemen of proven quality. The letter also calls for a ketch, a sailing ship with two masts, manned with forty men and twelve guns to disrupt the illegal trade along the Atlantic coastline as well as guarding against the constant threat of pirates.⁴² A connection between Byrd’s world and Wafer’s emerges from documents like these, that indicate an effort by inland planter-officials to stem illegitimate exchanges in and around the Chesapeake.

There is a strong possibility that one of the key authors of the letter was William Byrd. While writing on behalf of the good of the colony, Byrd also had several private reasons for ensuring that new regulations become part of colonial economic policy. Areas neighboring his plantation located on the fall line of the James River in Henrico County

⁴¹ “The Council of Virginia to Lords of Trade and Plantations, May 4, 1683”, CO Item 1063, Vol. 11 (1681-1685), pp. 423-426.

⁴² CO Item 1063, Vol. 11.

had seen an influx of immigrants, including “factious persons,” who threatened his business practices and led the easily persuaded toward poor business decisions. Hostilities by frontier Indians created tension which often jeopardized his successful trading ventures. Increased tobacco production by immigrant farmers drove the price of tobacco down eliminating potential profit from his tobacco yield. All of these concerns related to Byrd’s activity as a businessman. He typified the colony’s planter elite who combined business practices with influence in colonial government’s affair, often urging for legislation that would help expand or protect his own business interests. Thus the accusation of concealing “private ends under a show of public utility” could refer less to recently arrived immigrants but, ironically, to Byrd himself.

Byrd’s hand is suggested in the authorship of the document by requests regarding Indian trade. The letter goes on to complain, “When all persons are permitted to traffic with the Indians, men will be found not only to countenance but to abet their attacks on us.” Again, like the under-regulated coastal trade, wholesale trade with the Indians, to the officials’ minds, caused instability and potential violence in the western portion of the colony. The Council recommended that “Indian trade should be confined to the hands of one or two trustworthy men appointed by the Governor, such persons to pay a sum agreed on to the Government, and continue in that state for five years.” Another condition of the proposal is that no Indian should be taken as a slave. This stipulation reflects an effort to curtail any antagonizing practices by colonists and traders in order to improve relations with potential indigenous trade partners and quell lingering tension between Indians and

English colonists.⁴³ The earnest concern apparent in the petitions of the 1680s regarding western trade underscore the anxiety created by Bacon's Rebellion and efforts to avoid similar situations as the economic climate of Virginia solidified.

Byrd as a Colonial Official

By the 1680s Byrd enjoyed the position of one of the most powerful men in the colony. He gained the reputation as the colony's leading expert on Indian trade and affairs. Guidance by his uncle Thomas Stegge, Jr. allowed him to come in almost constant contact with Indian trade partners while building his prestige in Henrico County as well as Jamestown. By most interpretations he navigated the year of rebellion shrewdly, taking advantage of instability to further ingratiate himself with colonial and royal authority. He took calculated risks that indicate the mind of a business opportunist. He also participated in the often ruthless handling of his Indian neighbors and trade partners, while employing elements of slave acquisitions and trading. His ambition led him to a seat in the assembly where he furthered his power by proposing legislation that would gain him royal favor, expand his trading sphere, and protect him from competitors. Eventually he combined his public and private interests more completely by becoming the colony's deputy auditor-general, a position he spent considerable amount of energy and money securing. All of these developments suggest a mind intensely focused on political and economic opportunism. In the years since he had arrived in the colony Byrd worked to build his inheritance as well as his family and political reputation into

⁴³ CO Item 1063, Vol. 11.

something that would continue to bring him wealth and power. By doing so he participated in an economy-driven developmental project of the frontier that advantaged himself and his partners as the colony began to extend away from the Chesapeake and look for diversified economic enterprises in the west.

Byrd and the Council viewed social stability and personal experience as qualities in which to grow a western trade market. The proposal to create one or two regulated monopolies to oversee and understate trade west of the fall line indicates a desire by colonial authorities to allow individuals experienced in Indian trading to continue to build and initiate new avenues of trade without the disorder of numerous unrestricted traders carrying on unpredictable relations with their Indian trade partners. Men like Byrd who were familiar with both Jamestown policy and the complicated social and geographic networks of the indigenous trails gained the most support from colonial officials regarding the control of Indian trade. Strong relationships with London mercantile firms also firmed up individuals like Byrd's potential to turn a profit from Indian trade networks with government support.

Assurances of peace in the western counties of the colony played a crucial role in this effort. In the previous decade Virginia experienced its most pressing crisis since its founding with Bacon's rebellion. Just as colonial officials viewed piracy and smuggling as a corruption of the Chesapeake's economic development, they similarly viewed the potential threat of Indian raids and attacks as undermining the growth, however sluggish, of trade avenues west of the indigenous populated areas of Chesapeake's

Tsenacommachah.⁴⁴ The rebellion not only underscored the threat of Indian encroachment on territory, it also demonstrated the unpredictability and volatility of the colonists themselves. Conceivably this is why the May 4th letter calls for regular pay for the proposed garrison lest they be mutinous “and set a bad example where none is needed,” and that their officers “be gentlemen of approved loyalty, and of good family and estate in the country, who will be bound by their own interest to the preservation of the peace.”⁴⁵ The memory of Bacon’s mutiny, still fresh in the minds of officials in Jamestown, resonates through these recommendations by the Council to the Lords of Trade. Wishing to assert more colonial power westward, the Council urged the Lords of Trade to support them financially in placing proactive safeguards against the event of mutinies and rebellions such as the one in 1676.

In addition to prompting new military measures reaching from the Chesapeake to the fall line of the James River, Bacon’s Rebellion also allowed for a new chapter in English inland trade, one that attached Tsenacommachah to the frontier of the fall line and beyond. English traders now appropriated former Powhatan trade routes that reached outside of the mainly tidewater domain of the indigenous group, particularly to the southwest where competition grew strong enough to prompt traders to search for means of getting their goods faster in order to beat out their competitors.⁴⁶ The area’s trade

⁴⁴ Tsenacommacah is the name given by the Powhatan people to their homeland. See David G. Sweet and Gary B. Nash, *Struggle and Survival in Colonial America* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1982); Helen Roundtree, *Pocahontas's People: The Powhatan Indians of Virginia Through Four Centuries* (Norman, OK, University of Oklahoma Press, 1996).

⁴⁵ CO Item 1063, Vol. 11.

⁴⁶ Marion Tinling, ed., *Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia 1684-1776: Vol. I & II* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1977) 1:58.

networks continued to grow in the final decades of the seventeenth century so that by 1700 there were several dozen traders employing the ancient pre-Columbian network per year.⁴⁷ Byrd operated at the epicenter of these developments. Bacon's Rebellion drew him into a conflict where he maneuvered skillfully to take advantage of changing government structures in Jamestown. After roughly 14 years in the colony Byrd, age 31, now sat in the upper house of the colony's assembly, proposing legislation that would expand his interests and aid in the transformation of Virginia.

Byrd and Transoceanic Trade

Byrd's activity on the frontiers of the Virginia colony represents only one facet of his business dealings. The many projects Byrd operated simultaneously during his career demonstrate the entrepreneurial compulsion to find diverse forms of income and profit generating ventures. Usually this involved transoceanic commercial networks, requiring contact and communication with areas of influence far away from the fall line of the James. In this sense Byrd was a merchant as well as a planter. Out of necessity Byrd's business correspondence entered a communications triangle that connected England, Virginia, and the Caribbean. Byrd, like many other planter/businessmen, realized the imperative of international commercial connections in building their trade. These connections allowed access to expanding opportunities as well as the latest cosmopolitan styles, ideas, and products that came to Virginia via English ships. As a merchant, Byrd

⁴⁷ April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) 36. James H. Merrell, *The Indians New World: Catawbas and their Neighbors from European Contact through the Era of Removal* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991) 29.

had to know his customers, often as diverse in needs as a Piedmont Indian and a London fur trader. Transoceanic trade brought considerable anxiety as the colonial entrepreneur had to expect the difficulties of long distance trade in an era of unpredictable, often dangerous, shipping and communications channels.

Most of the commodities a planter traded travelled long distances across the Atlantic to and from the center of England's expanding commercial empire, London. David Hancock describes London as the preeminent European port by 1700, containing twenty-nine official wharves that oversaw duties and the processing of numerous commodities from around the world. London also served as the empire's shipbuilding center until New England and southern ports took over that role in the eighteenth century. London supplied seafarers with access to the best navigational equipment in Europe including the globes, maps telescopes and compasses that allowed for long-distance transoceanic journeys. The city acted as the home port for England's monopoly companies, the East India Company, the South Sea Company, the Royal Africa Company, all sources for the city's re-exportation market. Wholesale stalls abounded in the city, selling fish, produce, and livestock while in the suburbs skilled artisans and craftsmen refined raw materials into resalable commodities such as silk, clothing, rum, beer, and sugar. Overseas markets drove the economic development of London, supporting it not only as a commodities exchange center but as a financing center that housed large national banks like the Bank of England, as well as smaller lending houses, maritime insurance firms, and early brokerage ventures which dealt in company stocks. Culturally it offered the best education for the mercantile class, of which elite colonists

from around the world took advantage by sending their children back to England to school. The education often focused on mercantile interests supplying a young entrepreneur access to merchant apprenticeships that few cities in Europe could rival. London also housed one of the most developed press centers in the world allowing access to news from around the world from newspapers like the *Gazetteer*, *London Evening Post*, and *Lloyd's List*, the publication most vital to international traders.⁴⁸ Byrd spent his first seventeen years in London as the son of a goldsmith surrounded by the economic environment of a burgeoning global commercial center which no doubt influenced his entrepreneurial development and supplied him with particular insight into transatlantic and transoceanic trade. His quick apprenticeship as a merchant planter in Virginia completed his education in transatlantic trade, and as his business correspondence demonstrates he played a part in developing and managing several transatlantic networks generating to and from England's capital.⁴⁹

Trade in the Chesapeake at the end of the seventeenth century reflected the region's geographical and social qualities and its reliance on its most important commodity, tobacco. London merchants became more invested in the Chesapeake as the demand for tobacco grew. Until the early eighteenth century English merchants used the factor system to obtain Chesapeake tobacco by which an agent ("factor") would travel to

⁴⁸ David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) p. 32-33, 86-87. On London as a commercial and cultural center see: Joseph G. Broodbank, *History of the Port of London* (London: Forgotten Books, 1921); Mary Dorothy George, *London Life in the 18th Century* Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2005);

⁴⁹ Pierre Marambaud, "William Byrd I, A Fortune Founded on Smoke," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 82, No. 4 (October, 1974), p. 430-457. Marambaud, "William Byrd I," p. 132.

the colonies to secure tobacco for goods brought from Europe. The agent would usually receive ten percent commission from the profit of the venture. The factor would stay in the colony temporarily, often taking up residence at an established plantation and spending the day travelling the region to arrange goods for tobacco transactions.

Plantations like Byrd's represented the home of what Paul Clemens calls the merchant-planters of the colony. Often the larger plantation contained an outbuilding called a store that had the original purpose of storage but gradually became a place where local tenants and small farmers traded or purchased goods in the absence of travelling peddlers. A planter who dealt from these larger plantations supplied a growing, and often unbalanced, retail business for rural residents. By the 1690s many prominent planters, like Byrd, saw more potential for profit in accepting wholesale goods traded for tobacco directly from London, cutting out the middleman. Planters like Byrd converted to the consignment system to move their tobacco, either receiving payment in the form of goods or as a bill of exchange. By the last decade of the seventeenth century, as demand in labor increased in Virginia, African slaves became a more sought after commodity. Often bills of exchange were the only form of payment a slave trader would accept after coin, always in short supply in Virginia. Thus the consignment system employed by planters reinforced the growth of the African slave system by allowing slaves to be bought directly from the proceeds of tobacco.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Jacob M. Price, *Perry of London: A Family and a Firm on the Seaborne Frontier, 1615-1753*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992) p. 29-31. See also, Price, "The Economic Growth of the Chesapeake and the European Market, 1697-1775," *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 24, No. 4 (Dec., 1964), pp. 496-511; "What Did Merchants Do? Reflections on British Overseas Trade, 1660-1790." *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 49, No. 2, The Tasks of Economic History (Jun., 1989), pp. 267-

In addition, merchant planters developed a system of supplying goods that could attach a permanent yoke of debt to a small farmer or tenant. Byrd's son, William Byrd II, explained the cycle of debt that local farmers endured under the influence of the more economically powerful planters. "On every river of the province there are men in number from ten to thirty, who by trade and industry have got very complete estates. These gentlemen take care to supply the poorer sort with goods and necessities and are sure to keep them always in their debt, and consequently dependent on them." Byrd might be viewed as the prototypical model of the merchant planter his son describes. Byrd II also acknowledges the level of public office the governor awarded these planter merchants. The elder Byrd was certainly one of the number that "are chosen her Majesty's Council, the Assembly, the Justices and Officers of the Government." Byrd II recognized the potent and exploitive combination of economic power on the frontier and political power in Jamestown, something that his father benefitted from all of his adult life and he himself would enjoy as a Virginia elite planter in the succeeding generation ⁵¹

The London company Byrd dealt with the most was Perry and Lane, a family firm that participated in the growth of English economic hegemony in North America at the end of the seventeenth century. Perry and Lane typified the type of firm that arose during England's global expansion, as companies searched for commodities from the West and East Indies, Africa, and the Caribbean. Perry and Lane became the most important

284; "The Transatlantic Economy," in Jack P. Greene and J.R. Pole, eds., *Colonial British America: Essays in the New History of the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983).

⁵¹ William Byrd, *History of the Dividing Line and Other Tracts*, ed. Thomas H. Wynne, Historical Documents from the Old Dominion, II, III (Richmond: 1866) II, p. 163.

company trading in Virginia from 1690-1740 due to its interest in tobacco, North America's most valuable export. As part of the factor system, they entered the Virginia tobacco trade in the 1660s. At first they acted mainly as correspondents and middlemen for independent merchants in a variety of ventures, but, having established themselves in the preceding decades, by the 1690s they stood primed for the switch to consignment by large planters like Byrd.⁵² We know how important Perry and Lane was to Byrd's business by reading his business correspondence. The majority of his letters are addressed to the firm. In addition to lists of desired goods, his correspondences often complained about shipping arrangements, unreliable captains, high freight rates, as well as advising the company on the types of vessels they should use for shipments and where they could charter them. On one occasion he advised them to forgo shipping insurance and to take on the risk themselves, a suggestion that the company decided against. Byrd, like in much of his business dealings, tried to control events in favor of his primary goal, profit.⁵³

The majority of Byrd's business letters span the decades of the late 1680s and early 1690s, a period of intense entrepreneurial activity for the planter. Informing Byrd's business associates like Perry and Lane of tobacco inventories, shipments, shipping delays, price changes, regulations, and complaints about insufficient payments, the letters demonstrate the immediacy and anxiety of the planter's enterprises through sources that were probably never intended for posterity but only for contemporaneous uses. The

⁵² Price, *Perry*, p. 2, 32-33.

⁵³ Price, *Perry*, p. 35.

letters are to-the-point, and while displaying late-seventeenth century English upper-class manners, they rarely present personal or family information unless it pertains to business matters. Nevertheless, the undertone of the letters betrays an anxiety that accompanies the psyche of a businessman with multiple irons in the fire and with a considerable amount of investment risk, painting a particularly realistic picture 350 years later. Byrd's correspondence goes beyond documenting the business practices of a tobacco planter in colonial Virginia. It openly discloses the entrepreneurial life of a colonial official, planter, trader, and importer/exporter who anxiously juggled diverse inventories of multiple commodities entering and leaving the colony.

Above all of the subjects of these letters, tobacco, understandably, dominates the discourse. Tobacco provided the bedrock of Byrd's livelihood, and the building of his large estate over the course of his life rested on land used primarily for tobacco cultivation. Beyond his entrepreneurial duties Byrd had the unenviable task of overseeing tobacco production, a very taxing agricultural process. As T.H. Breen asserts, seventeenth and eighteenth-century tobacco cultivation placed considerable burdens on the planter throughout the entire year. Byrd would have overseen every aspect of growing and exporting his crop from the planting of the seed to the transport of hogsheads onto transatlantic ships. Unlike wheat you could not simply plant tobacco and wait for it to grow. A series of responsibilities dictated the cultivation process, any of which, if performed negligently, could result in a failed crop for the season. The production cycle began in January or early February when seeds were planted in beds enriched with manure or ash. During the winter a constant effort to protect the seedlings from frost

continued until spring when attention turned to warding off insects. The workers then transferred the seedlings to their field beds, requiring the planter to rely on prior knowledge, and often luck, when choosing which to transplant. The success of the plants relied on soaking rains, an unpredictable element at best, and when torrents did occur planters often had to make the best of it and tend to the plants in the downpour. The summer stage of the process required continued battle against weeds and a daily hoeing of each tobacco hill, sometimes three times in a workday.⁵⁴

When it came time to harvest, usually in September, Byrd would experience the highest anxiety of the year. The responsibility to decide the correct time to cut the tobacco rested solely on his shoulders, if he left the crop out too late, frost could ruin it in a night. Cutting too early would produce equally devastating results; green tobacco was worthless. This decision usually relied on folk wisdom and years of experience rather than any written manual on what constitutes ripe and unripe tobacco. Curing, referred to by some observers as an art, offered equal opportunities for failure, one that when successful produced a leaf that was not too dry or too moist, avoiding disintegration in the former and rot in the later. Tedious stemming then awaited Byrd's workers after which the placing of layer after layer of tobacco leaves into hogsheads (large barrels made by the plantations' coopers) followed. The leaves were pressed into a solid mass, of up to 1,000 pounds. This also required careful decision making, too much pressing could break the hogshead, but profit depended on the weight of the barrel so planters tried to

⁵⁴ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*: p. 46-49.

press as much tobacco into each without breaking them. Byrd then had to wait until the following spring to ship his tobacco. With this much labor, planning, risk, and skill involved, tobacco planting, an economic institution in Virginia by Byrd's day, still remained the chief entrepreneurial activity of the colony. Because of the extended period of return on an immense commercial undertaking it also fostered other entrepreneurial activity, such as the types Byrd employed, to hedge against years of poor yields or gluts.⁵⁵

Byrd does not address the physical labors of tobacco planting in his letters, but he does spend time at the beginning of many of them to report on the quality and yield of his crops. He also demonstrates varied attitudes about the business of growing the taxing plant. One such message from April 25th, 1684 is typical: "we are in likelihood of forward crops this year and I doubt not God saying amen, to be as forward as any of ye Marylanders."⁵⁶ The fact that Byrd invoked God in his relief that his crop is doing well underscored the anxiety planters felt over their main source of income. Other years he conveyed less positivity over his staple product. In a letter to an associate he writes, "My most hearty thanks for all your favors which I received so plentifully whilst I remained with you, and truly did our country afford anything I thought might be acceptable to you, I would endeavor a way to acknowledge your favors; but since we have nothing but stinking tobacco, and yet not worth a farthing, I hope you will accept my thanks."⁵⁷ The

⁵⁵ Breen, *Tobacco Culture*, p. 50-53.

⁵⁶ William Byrd, "William Byrd to Perry and Lane, April 25th, 1684," in "Letters of William Byrd, First, *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (June, 1916) p. 225-237.

⁵⁷ William Byrd, "William Byrd to Captain Dudley St. Leger, April 16th, 1688," in *Letters of William Byrd, VMHB*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (July, 1917) p. 250-264.

volatility of tobacco planting evoked both rejoicing and distain from Byrd depending on the success of the crop in any given year. This suggests a resentment over his reliance on tobacco as a staple form of income. This also serves to explain why Byrd felt the need to generate other commercial ventures.

Byrd was particularly frustrated over the shipping of his tobacco and the time ships could take for his product to cross the Atlantic. His consternation over delayed shipping appears in a 1684 letter where he supports a plan by the captain of the ship carrying his hogsheads to lengthen his ship in order to make it faster. Shipping is a primary concern throughout his earlier letters, echoed in missives such as, “I could have wished we had brought or built a new [ship], rather then to have been at so much charge with this [one] had like to ruin us.”⁵⁸ Byrd’s anxiety over the inefficiency of ships carrying his tobacco and trade goods across the Atlantic, plus constant frustration over freight charges, eventually prompted him to either build or purchase a ship of his own in 1686. He characteristically named it the *Byrd*. In February he wrote, “The *Byrd* I hope may be ready some time next month. Audley hath (much ado) promised me about 150 heads and I know not but I may go with him if I can procure freight, which I yet want for nearly 300 heads.”⁵⁹ By owning his own ship Byrd could directly oversee his shipping operations and avoid freight costs while enjoying the income from the freight costs he now charged to others. On the other hand he took on the responsibility of making sure

⁵⁸ William Byrd, “William Byrd to Perry and Lane, 1784,” in “Letters of William Byrd, First, *VMHB*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (June, 1916) p. 225-237.

⁵⁹ William Byrd, “William Byrd to Perry and Lane, Feb. 12th, 1686,” in “Letters of William Byrd, First, *VMHB*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (June, 1916) p. 225-237.

that his shipping ventures were profitable. The letter suggests that he needed a certain quota of hogsheads to ensure the maximum profit for the risk he incurred by entering into the shipping business.

Amongst all of the frustrations of tobacco planting and shipping, Byrd managed to diversify toward an often lucrative import business, exchanging furs and pelts from his Indian trade operations and tobacco from his fields for desirable manufactured goods. After tobacco, Byrd's letters' constantly turn to the procurement of English and Caribbean trade goods. Byrd continually writes of furs and skins from the western trade routes which he received in return for English goods, including cloth and clothing, belts, beads, guns, and gun parts. In addition, numerous manufactured goods from the Atlantic trade networks appear in the correspondence including everything from madeira to millstones. The constant attention Byrd demonstrates toward the quality and quantity of these items in his letters attests to the diversity of trade goods and their importance in supplying comfort, and even some luxury, to the inhabitants of the colony. It also reveals that manufacturing of everyday items within the colony remained a limited profession. European manufactured fabric and clothing remained one of the most sought after commodities on inventory lists throughout the date range of the letters, and Byrd asserted himself as a supplier of French linens, Duffields cotton, serge, lace, French hats, slippers, table linens, and shoes.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ "Letters of William Byrd, I, April 16th, 1688," *VMHB*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (July, 1917) p. 250-264.

Byrd also supplied large quantities of consumable commodities to the colony. In April of 1688 he ordered 4,000 gallons of rum, 5,000 pounds of Caribbean muscovado sugar, 10 tons of molasses, and one barrel of white sugar, possibly for his private consumption. He asked that the rum, sugar, and molasses be shipped in small casks suggesting that he planned to retail the goods by the cask on an individual basis rather than trying to sell the bulk wholesale. Byrd also understood the probability of shortages and limited space on ships for the goods he requested. He ranked his requested items, asking that sugar and molasses take priority of other goods because of a shortage on the James River. With these possible shortfalls in mind he directed his Barbados supplier, John Thomas & Company, to “send at least half the sugar and molasses by the first convenience.”⁶¹ The list reflects the commodities available from the third point in Byrd’s trade triangle, Barbados. Sugar, rum, and molasses supplied the colony with luxury consumables and came with the potential for considerable profit if the goods survived the risks of oceanic transport. Strangely, Byrd occasionally ordered, for personal consumption, a consumable good that one might think a Virginia planter would have in abundance. In June he asked Perry and Lane to “remember me” a box of smoking tobacco.⁶²

As imports entered the colony through Byrd’s direction the planter also devised ways of supplying the colony with materials manufactured at home. As early as 1684 he

⁶¹ “William Byrd to John Thomas and Company,” in “Letters of William Byrd, I,” *VMHB*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (July, 1917) p. 252-253.

⁶² William Byrd to Perry and Lane, June 9th, 1691,” in “Letters of William Byrd, I,” *VMHB*, Vol. 28, No. 1 (January 1920) p. 22.

wrote to Perry and Lane asking for material to build a saw mill. He writes, “I have enclosed sent for the iron work of a saw mill, which I desire may be sent by the first ship, and that the crank may be made exactly according to the enclosed pattern.” Byrd’s demonstrates considerable knowledge of iron materials and his specifications indicate extreme attention to detail. Regarding the sawmill’s crank, he goes on to write,

If it is cast (without flaws) it may do best; the rack and nut must fit, I am told it may be best and cheapest had out of Holland, but I think wrought iron is prohibited, therefor I must leave it to you, only earnestly desire that great care may be taken (in the crank especially) that the iron work be well and exactly according to the dimensions enclosed, for I hope my timberwork will before the end of 7 (July?) the next.?

Byrd knew he had to be very specific in his directions to Perry and Lane. Ill-fitting iron parts could delay the operation of his lumber mill for an extra year while he waited for the right parts to arrive the following spring or summer. The letter also indicates the colony’s need for manufactured iron works. Virginia lacked any substantial iron works until the middle of the eighteenth century, and European iron crossed the Atlantic to North America in the form of wrought and cast iron products. Their weight, and the difficulty of manufacturing them, necessarily made them an expensive proposition. Thus the detailed instructions from Byrd demonstrate his attention to this considerable investment.⁶³

⁶³ William Byrd to Perry and Lane, February 2nd, 1684,” in “Letters of William Byrd, First, *VMHB*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (June, 1916) p. 233.

Byrd also sought raw material exports other than tobacco from which to profit. In 1688 he investigated the possibility of crystal mining. Expeditions to survey areas that held potential for crystal mining met with resistance from Indians and rocks too hard for the tools used to break them. Byrd forwarded a surface sample to agents at Perry and Lane to obtain an estimated worth, promising that the crystal below the rocks' surfaces was of much clearer quality. He also asks for advice on whether to take up the venture or not. He writes, "I am confident it must be of value, but whither sufficient (considering its above miles beyond the Xtian inhabitants and what charge must be for cutting it) or not I know not but earnestly desire fully to inform yourself in this affair and please return to me and answer by the first convenience, for I have thoughts of taking up the land forthwith." The possibility of a profitable mining venture captured Byrd's entrepreneurial imagination. Risk against return the main motivator, Byrd employed his London agents to report back on the value of the commodity so he could weight it against the dangers and decide if he should annex (Indian) land for the project.⁶⁴

Byrd bought and sold slaves throughout his adult life in Virginia, and his records show that slave trading was a constant in his business affairs. Demand for African slaves increased as the seventeenth century ended, and the consignment system of selling tobacco allowed large planters to pay for slaves using bills of exchange from England's tobacco merchants. An operation such as Byrd's required considerable amounts of skilled and unskilled laborers. Indentured servants' period-of-service finished in under ten years,

⁶⁴ "William Byrd to Perry and Lane, June 16th, 1688," in "Letters of William Byrd, I," *VMHB*, Vol. 25, No. 3 (July, 1917) p. 259-260.

making experienced lifetime workers scarce. Indian slaves, which Byrd definitely employed in his early career, presented challenges due to their connection with their indigenous homelands, often only miles away. In letters from 1684 Byrd mentions both English servants. Disappointed in the rate and lateness of English servants Byrd wrote, “servants at the rates you mention, at the later season of the year cannot be worthwhile, others had much cheaper and forward.”⁶⁵ Slaves seemed to be a better option and Byrd states “the negroes (if they come), I take some if they prove well.”⁶⁶ In 1688, in a passage accounting the sale of livestock, Byrd states, “I have passed my note, as also for 50£ more to Colonel James Powell for two negroes. I have also paid £21 for a negro girl about 15 years old.”⁶⁷ Byrd’s largest order for slaves requested 506 Africans between the ages of 12 and 24 by way of Barbados. Accounts of the purchase of slaves rests among directions about how to ship shrubs and inquiries about the weather in London. Among missives about the shipboard destruction of inventory by “worms and vermin” and complaints about unreliable ship captains exist curt, mater-of-fact sentences noting the purchase of slaves or the death of Indians by English hands on the frontier. Thus, Byrd’s business correspondence does not necessarily reveal an active concerted effort to promote institutionalized slavery and ethnic hegemony, but rather exposes an arguably more disquieting possibility, that entrepreneurial planters regarded chattel slavery as just one of

⁶⁵ “William Byrd to Perry and Lane, 1684,” in “Letters of William Byrd, I,” Vol. 24, No.3 (June 1916), 232.

⁶⁶ William Byrd to Perry and Lane, April 25th, 1684,” in “Letters of William Byrd, I,” Vol. 24, No.3 (June 1916), 229.

⁶⁷ “William Byrd to Perry and Lane, 1684,” in “Letters of William Byrd, I,” Vol. 24, No.3 (June 1916), 232.

many necessary parts of the overall business framework of the economy he and his planter partners were trying to build.

Evaluation of every aspect of Byrd's transatlantic business dealings remains a tempting project for future study. The ventures listed above are just some examples of the characteristics of a merchant planter in late seventeenth-century Virginia. Evaluated as an entrepreneur, Byrd exhibits the qualities of an individual who committed himself almost obsessively to matters of opportunistic commercial interest. The planter demonstrated the considerable amount of mental and physical energy required to manage such wide-ranging operations. Byrd had to constantly plan ahead and anticipate potential problems with numerous ventures. He consistently focused on profit, evaluating his decisions based on their profitability and feasibility, and dispassionately understanding, like many Virginia planters, that slavery would bring down labor costs and could be maintained more cheaply. He provided innovations in the form of regional manufacturing operations such as saw and grist mills. All the time he worked to defray risk and expenses, by actions such as owning his own ship and writing detailed instructions to insure that his requests were understood completely. His activities in the 1680-1690s allowed him to build his reputation as a major influence in the development of the colony. This status paved the way for a new and even more lucrative position as the colony's auditor.

Byrd as Auditor and Treasurer

In the late seventeenth century Virginia employed two auditors to oversee and direct the taxation of the colony. Established in the 1680s, the Auditor General resided in

England and administered the revenue of all of England's American colonies. The "Auditor and Receiver for Virginia Duties," created as early as the 1650s and initially held by Byrd's uncle Thomas Stegge, Jr., directed tax collection and accounting by county sheriffs toward the disbursement of the King's revenue. Jamestown received the accounts annually, usually in March when the General Court and General Assembly convened. The colony awarded Thomas Digges the position in the early seventeenth century after Digges' promotion of silk culture in Virginia, followed by Nathaniel Bacon the Elder (a cousin of Nathaniel Bacon of Bacon's Rebellion) who competed against Robert Ayleway for the office until 1687. The position included numerous benefits, resulting in contests for the position until Byrd's final appointment after buying out his rivals, Ayleway and Bacon, in 1688. Competition over the position, and the purchase of the office, points to the potential monetary and political advantages the office held.⁶⁸

The Virginia Auditor directed the accounts of two portions of the colony's revenue, that which belonged to the colony and that which belonged to the Crown. In the 1680s colonial revenue streamed in from quit-rents; duties on tobacco (two shilling per exported hogshead), fifteen pence per ton for incoming shipped goods; a penny for every pound of tobacco exported to other English colonies; various fines; land and property forfeitures; and permanent and temporary customs. The auditor created a general account from the accounts of all of his collectors and presented it to the governor and the Council

⁶⁸ Philip Alexander Bruce, *Institutional History of Virginia in the Seventeenth Century: an Inquiry into the Religious, Moral, Educational, Legal, Military, and Political Condition of the People Based on Original and Contemporaneous Records* (Glouster, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1910) 598-599.

who reviewed it and sent it to the Auditor General in England. The colony's auditor also sent a request from the Governor and Council to the Auditor General detailing disbursements toward colonial expenses and often requesting that some royal revenue remain for the need of drawing funds for unforeseen costs.

Governor Lord Culpeper discontinued a process of oversight by the House of Burgesses that gave members a full account of the revenues handled by the auditor and recommendations for expenditures. After the discontinuation of the examination by the House, the Burgesses regularly called for the restoration of the review, it being the only thorough annual review the accounts got before reaching the Governor's desk. The only bodies now that examined accounts and made recommendations regarding the colony's revenues were the auditor, the Governor with the advice of the Council, and the auditor General in London, acting on behalf of the Crown. Until the end of the seventeenth century no appreciable checks upon the auditor's office existed to prevent the holder from fraudulent or negligent actions. The auditor often held two offices, the other being the Receiver of English Duties whose chief responsibilities were to administer export tax on furs and skins and import taxes on slaves, servants, and spirits. Before 1699, when Governor Francis Nicholson recommended that one man not be allowed to hold both offices, the position of Auditor and Receiver of Virginia Duties held great potential for extenuating an individual's wealth in the colony, especially if the holder of the office already enjoyed considerable knowledge of the products and revenues entering and exiting the colony. William Byrd's lucrative activities as Auditor and Receiver, informed by his experience in numerous entrepreneurial activities, eventually prompted a call for

the separation of the two offices by Nicholson due to lack of oversight over the actions of the position. (footnote needed, Bruce)

Evidence of suspicions of conflict-of-interest and other anxieties about the office of Auditor exist in a letter Nicholson wrote to the Council of Trade and Plantations in July of 1699. The recommendation explained that the office of Receiver “should be a distinct officer from the auditor, so that one may receive and pay all H.M. revenues and the other audit his accounts in general and others in particular, and that each of them should have a room in the Public Building.” Nicholson recommended that each individual holding the respective offices be required to live at the seat of government. Byrd currently worked and kept the colony’s accounts at his home, a condition that brought concerns over oversight as well as fear that either Byrd, who was aging by this time, would die suddenly with the state of the colony’s financial affairs in arrears, or fire would destroy the considerably accounting documents concerning Virginia’s revenue. Nicholson invoked the ghost of Bacon while making his point, arguing that Bacon rose up because Governor Berkley suffered infirmities and could not rule efficiently. Those causing an inefficient and decentralized colonial government included members of council who, Nicholson claimed “are old and very infirm and live at great distances from the seat of government, so ‘tis a difficult thing to have a number of Councilors together, and when they are so there may happen great disputes about the person of the President and his power singly.” Byrd, now a senior a member of Council, fits the depiction Nicholson gave of an official detached from the affairs of the colony by distance and matters of self-interest.

Byrd, who Nicholson claimed made 7.5% on all the colony's revenue, was included in a general condemnation by the Governor later in a letter to the Council of Trade and Plantations. Nicholson wrote, "It has been the custom here for the Secretaries, Auditors, Collectors and Naval Officers to be Councilors, who did not think themselves obliged to attend their offices but thought they were given them to make profit on and compensate the charge and trouble of attending Councils, etc." Nicholson went on to sum up his disdain for using public office for private profit by stating, "It is an ill-custom for the office to attend the officer and he not the office." The implication that certain offices were misused to bolster the personal wealth of the individuals who held them reveals the gray area of public duty and private enterprise that defined officialdom in colonial Virginia. A merchant planter such as Byrd utilized his intelligence, industry, and ambition to win over those in the higher echelons of power. He maneuvered himself into an important position by being indispensable, particularly in his knowledge of and interaction with Virginia's trade networks. As a wealthy and influential colonist he committed himself to the expectations of public duty, serving on the Governor's Council from 1683 until the year of his death in 1704. His expertise with Indian trade earned him a command of the forces along the fall line of the James River. But these positions usually came with little compensation from the government other than personal expenses. The position of auditor came with a percentage of revenue and control over a complex system of duty, customs, and tax collection. The combination of Byrd's career as a frontier trader complimented this official position, and while Nicholson could not find direct evidence of malfeasance on the part of Byrd as auditor, it is probable that Byrd

skirted the edge of corruption in order gain the most advantage of his position without falling afoul of colonial authority.

William Byrd, as an entrepreneur planter, represents the first generation of the transition of Virginia's Atlantic economy as it approached the eighteenth century. Tobacco and slavery dominated the succeeding decades, promoted by Byrd and his colleagues in the later quarter of the seventeenth century. The growth of slavery, funded by tobacco proceeds and expedited by the consignment system indicated a consolidation of planter economic power. Byrd augmented his tobacco holdings by trading slaves, exploiting Indian trade routes, and building on entrepreneurial diversity. His ability and success in the colony relied on connections and patronage of his English and Virginian relatives from the preceding generation, but he also proved himself to be a shrewd political opportunist among his own generation as he maneuvered in the fraught period and aftermath of his friend Bacon's insurrection. By doing so he strengthened connections to the commercial world of Atlantic London as his family's roots in Virginia deepened. This experience led him to the most lucrative official position in Virginia. But Byrd was not singularly distinct in his activities. Rather he is an example of a transition toward a standard of planter influence in Virginia that would wax for decades and inform the character of the colony through the eighteenth century. This would be a departure from the earlier, permeable, and maritime-based world of Lionel Wafer, and Byrd's economic activity, especially on the frontier, predicted firmer footing for Britain's commercial empire in Virginia.

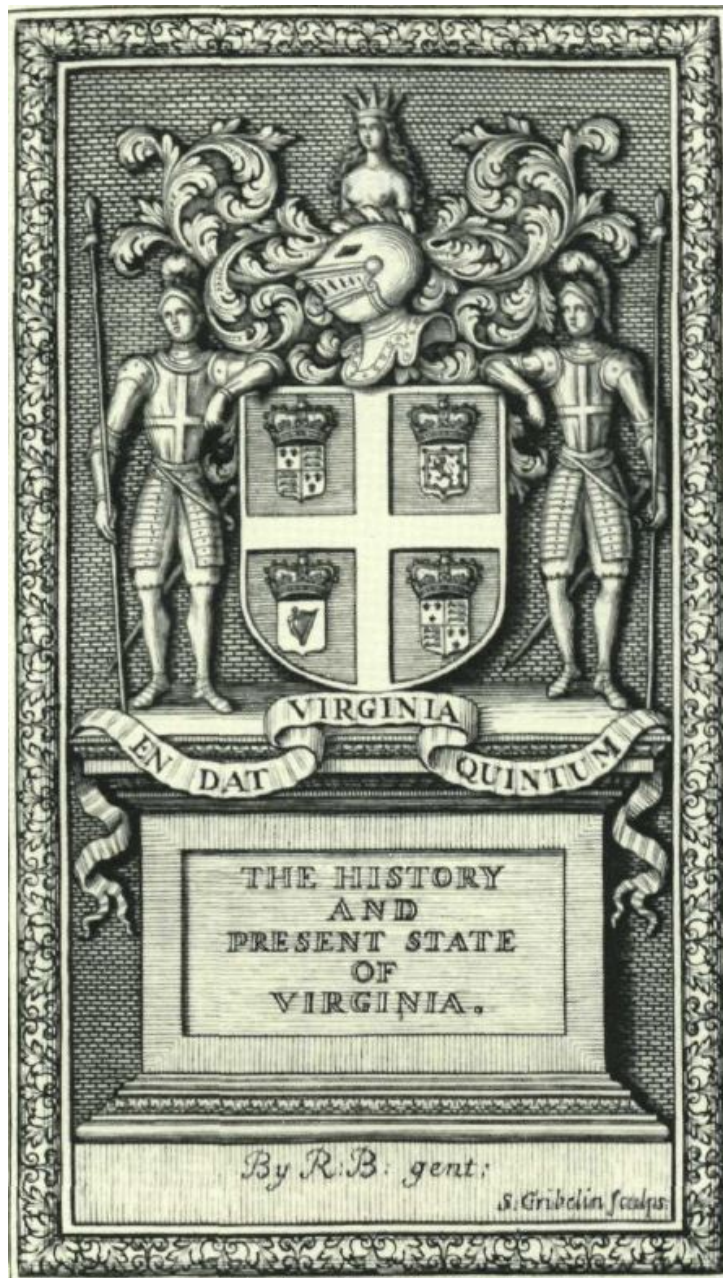


Figure 3. Front piece of Beverley's 1705 edition of *History of the Present State of Virginia*. From *History of the Present State of Virginia*, Susan Scott Parish, ed. (Chapel Hill: 2013).

CHAPTER IV

“BY A DUE SPIRIT OF INDUSTRY AND MANAGEMENT,” ROBERT BEVERLEY AND THE TRANSATLANTIC ECONOMY OF KNOWLEDGE

No seed is sowed there, but it thrives, and most plants are improved, by being transplanted thither. And yet there's very little improvement made among them, or anything used in traffic but tobacco.¹

Robert Beverley

Lionel Wafer and William Byrd operated energetically within their occupational spheres, one connected to the seafaring world, the other significantly land based. Both men depended on or were influenced by the world of the other. Wafer became entangled in the colonial web of practices regarding smuggling and piracy. His activities skirted the galvanizing grasp of the colonial authority, of which Byrd was a rising member. Wafer and his form of illegitimate entrepreneurship fell victim to the changing role of Chesapeake seafarers as Virginia slowly but steadily transformed its economic identity to adapt to transatlantic commerce. Byrd, through his concentrated efforts in the colonial commercial world, promoted this planter-businessman persona and employed the Atlantic seafaring world to project it back to England. He grew his businesses in Virginia by effectively exploiting three conditions: an increase in dependency on slave-labor, his official position in colonial government, and sturdy, family-based, transatlantic connections. His records reveal a virtually uninterrupted preoccupation with business

¹ Robert Beverley, Susan Scott Parrish, ed., *The History and Present State of Virginia: A New Edition with an Introduction by Susan Scott Parrish* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2013) 248.

affairs throughout his life. By the time he had firmly established himself in the colony he employed personal and colonial interest in tandem. It seems clear that Byrd's main interests focused on the wealth and wellbeing of himself and his family, but he also either intentionally or unintentionally promoted the possibility that, by following his example, a man with proper business acumen could become rich and influential in Virginia.

A fellow planter, administrative colleague, and son-in-law of Byrd's, Robert Beverley Jr. also combined his knowledge of the natural environment and social fabric of Virginia to further his personal and professional goals. Much more so than Byrd however, Beverley overtly and publically promoted the colony, most notably with the authorship of *History and Present State of Virginia* (1705) which relayed an unconcealed advertising agenda that sought to advance the British Empire in the Chesapeake and Virginia backcountry. Pursuing the entrepreneurial networks of transatlantic publishing, Beverley contributed to a century long tradition of authorship by participants in Virginia's settlement and economy, while simultaneously directing interest toward colonial enterprises that would benefit his financial well-being. Beverley exploited to his benefit his experience as a creole Virginian, the reading public's undiminished hunger for literature about the New World, and the networks of the early-modern information age. Simultaneously he sought to present the colony as a land of opportunity for future entrepreneurs, continuing earlier efforts that combined personal enticements with the furthering of English imperial aims. As explored in Chapter 1, Lionel Wafer also became familiar with this system of exchange also, with the publication of his travel narrative, the two men allowing their familiarity with imperial frontiers to bring notoriety to themselves

while actively promoting and justifying the pursuits of Britain's imperial aims. His writing contributed significantly to early-modern attempts at national self-identification. Beverley, employing substantial elements of entrepreneurship, participated fully in a propagandized and anglicized transatlantic economy of knowledge to further his own fortunes as well as the British Empire's.

Decades before the founding of Jamestown in 1607, colonial Virginia operated as a heavily-promoted region of Atlantic real-estate. In the early seventeenth century piety and profit seemed inextricable to this pursuit. Reverend William Symond's 1609 sermon to "Adventurers and Planters" bound for Virginia proclaimed America "a western Canaan reserved for England," indicating, in religious terms, the potential of an American promised land. Messages such as Symond's also contained significant undertones of economic opportunity for the empire, one that in Anglican minds linked God's design to the commercial expansion of England.¹ Arthur Barlow, captain of the Lost Colony expedition, wrote of the New World's potential for exploitable land and maritime material, "The soil is most plentiful, sweet, fruitful and wholesome of all the world...they have those oaks that we have, but far greater and...the highest and reddist cedars in the world."² Promoters distributed messages of devotion and profit from the late sixteenth century on, beginning with Thomas Hariot's work of 1588, *A Briefe and True Report of the New Found Land of Virginia* the first book of its kind produced by an actual English

¹ Louis B. Wright, *Religion and Empire and the Alliance Between Piety and Commerce in English Expansion* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018) 91, 84.

² Richard Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation* (12 vols., Glasgow, 1903-1905), VIII, 299-305. See also Hugh T. Lefler, "Promotional Literature of the Southern Colonies," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 33, No.1 (Feb. 1967) pp.3-25.

eyewitness of the new world. Richard Hakluyt's influential *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques & Discoveries of the English Nation*, published in 1600, contributed considerably to what historian Hugh Lefler calls "glorified advertising," setting a model for much of the promotional literature that came after it.³ The founding of the Virginia Company and the subsequent colony of Jamestown allowed for a sustained production of promotional literature that mixed the imperial and missionary aims of its producers. John Smith's *A True Relation* (1608) and especially his later work *A Map of Virginia* (1612), worked to strengthen an imperial foothold through promotion as the colony experienced its most tenuous decades. Smith's description echoed Captain Barlow's when he wrote, "heaven and earth never agreed better to frame a place for man's habitation," stating, "the temperature of this country doth agree well with English constitutions being once seasoned in the country." The Virginia Company generated an outpouring of promotional literature in the decade following Jamestown's founding and tended to assure settlers and investors of the potential and security of the colony with titles such as *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia, with the Confutation of such scandalous reports as have tended to the disgrace so worthy an enterprise* and the more

³ Hugh T. Lefler, "Promotional Literature of the Southern Colonies," *The Journal of Southern History*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (Feb. 1967), p. 3. For secondary sources focusing on promotional literature about the New World also: Mary C. Fuller, *Voyages in Print: English Narratives of Travel to America 1576-1624* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Susan Castillo, Ivy Schweitzer, *The Literatures of Colonial America: An Anthology* (Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley Blackwell, 2001); Timothy Sweet, *American Georgics: Economy and Environment in Early American Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001); Andrew Fitzmaurice, *Humanism and America: An Intellectual History of English Colonization, 1500-1625* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Thomas Scanlan, *Colonial Writing and the New World 1583-1671, Allegories of Desire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Gesa Mackenthun, *American Beginnings and the Translation of Empire 1492-1637* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

concisely titled *News from Virginia: The Lost Flock Triumphant* by the appropriately named author of promotional literature Richard Rich.⁴ Many of the earliest works on Virginia were produced on behalf of the Virginia Company to reassure shareholders and potential settlers.

Promotional pamphlets and tracts continued to appear throughout the seventeenth century, although after the dissolution of the Virginia Company this type of literature essentially halted for two decades. William Bullock's 1649 *Virginia Impartially examined...* acted as a promotional guide to potential settlers and an examination of failures of the first generation of colonists. Bullock indicted the colony's governors and burgesses for overuse of familial ties and a debilitating overreliance on tobacco. John Hammond's *Leah and Rachel, or, The Two Fruitful Sisters Virginia, and Maryland* use gendered biblical rhetoric to dispute the image of the Chesapeake as a place of lawless

⁴ John Smith, *True Relations*, reprinted in Lyon G. Tyler (ed.) *Narratives of Early Virginia, 1606-1625* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1952) 30-71, *A Map of Virginia*, Edward Arber (ed.), *Travels and Works of Captain John Smith* (Edinburg: 1910) I, 47, 48. It is important to note that Smith's account came only shortly after a particularly tragic period in the settlement's founding, one sometimes referred to as the starving time from 1609-10. The accounts in *A Map of Virginia* underscore the effort to diminish risk in accounts and paint the colony as a place physically conducive to the health and livelihood of English settlers. Jamestown historiography is wide-ranging and voluminous. Recent works, published around the year of Jamestown's quadricentennial, seek to reexamine the settlement in light of new insight. Some of the well-received works include James Horn, *A Land as God Made it: Jamestown and the Birth of America* (New York: Basic Books, 2006); Robert Applebaum, *Envisioning and English Empire: Jamestown and the Making of the North Atlantic World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005); Karen Ordahl Kupperman *The Jamestown Project* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2007); William M. Kelso, *Jamestown: The Buried Truth* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), for recent work on Smith see: Helen C. Rountree, Wayne E. Clark, and Kent Mountford, *John Smith's Chesapeake Voyages, 1607-1609* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007); J.A. Leo Lemay *The American Dream of Captain John Smith* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1991). Council for Virginia (England and Wales) *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia, with the Confutation of such scandalous reports as have tended to the disgrace so worthy an enterprise* (Ann Arbor, MI; Oxford: Text Creation Partnership, 2008-2009) Richard Rich, *News from Virginia: The Lost Flock Triumphant* (London, 1610) reprinted in *Magazine of American History*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (February, 1883) pp. 854-861.

rogues, and promote it as a place suitable for English settlers, especially women. Tracts such as these continued through the second half of the seventeenth century, contributing to a widening canon of works about the English Atlantic colonies. Well established by the beginning of the eighteenth century, promotional literature became a standard means of sponsoring entrepreneurial activities, not in small part because it was often written by the colonies' entrepreneurs themselves. Beverley entered this world of knowledge production after spending three decades in the free-for-all environment described in Chapters 1 and 2. His experience in Virginia informed his biases and agendas, eventually motivating him to produce an archetype of Anglican promotional literature.⁵

Unlike Wafer and Byrd, Beverley was not born in England but in Virginia, most-likely in Middlesex County around 1667 or 1668, but he was schooled in England. He married William Byrd's daughter, Ursula Byrd in 1697. She gave birth to a son but died shortly after in 1698. Beverley never remarried. His early career in Virginia indicates that he used connections from his own family and that of his in-laws to obtain lucrative clerkships which in turn allowed him to accumulate 6,000 acres of inherited and purchased land in King and Queen County, a county he became clerk in 1692. He combined this position with that of copyist and assistant to his half-brother Peter, the chief clerk of the General Court and the House of Burgesses, becoming clerk to the Committee of Public Claims, eventually replacing his brother as the General Court's

⁵ Lefler, "Promotional Literature," 12-13. William Bullock, *Virginia partially examined...* (London, 1649); John Hammond, *Leah and Rachel, or, The Two Fruitful Sisters Virginia, and Maryland*, reprinted in Clayton C. Hall, ed., *Narratives of Early Maryland, 1633-1684* (New York, 1910), 284-85, 290, 296-300.

chief clerk in 1693. He also held the position of register for the Virginia Court of Vice-Admiralty and he and his brother collected and organized remaining public papers after a fire destroyed the Jamestown statehouse. He became a representative in the House of Burgesses in 1799 and sat on the committee to revise the laws of the colony. In 1703 he became clerk of the House of Burgesses.⁶

In June of 1703 a discontent Beverley arrived in England. As clerk of King and Queen County, Virginia, he had entered into litigious land disputes over property he owned in Elizabeth City. He further exacerbated his difficulties by sending letters criticizing the acting executive officer of the colony, Governor Francis Nicholson, and the surveyor general of customs for the colony Robert Quarry. He also denigrated the House of Burgesses who he called “a pack of rude, unthinking, willful, obstinate people, without any regard to her Majesty or her interest, and it’s laid as a crime to them that they think themselves entitled to the liberties of Englishmen.”⁷ Nicholson’s agents intercepted this indictment of the governing body and the governor removed Beverley from office, bringing him political ruin.

⁶ Susan Scott Parrish, “Introduction,” in Susan Scott Parrish, ed., *The History and Present State of Virginia: A New Edition with an Introduction by Susan Scott Parrish* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Jeffery Ruggles and the *Dictionary of Virginia Biography* Robert Beverley (d. 1722). (2015, January 8). In *Encyclopedia Virginia*. Virginia Foundation for the Humanities, 8 Jan. 2015. Web. 21Feb. 2018. Beverley is also listed as a tobacco agent in Essex County, “Public Officers in Virginia, 1702, 1714, *VMHB* Vol 2., 2V, 4,7.

⁷ Louis B. Wright, *The First Gentlemen of Virginia: Intellectual Qualities of the Early Colonial Ruling Class* (San Marino, Ca.: The Huntington Library, 1940) 294. Beverley was also echoing John Smith a century earlier who’s first work about the Jamestown settlement, *True Relations*, contained sharp criticism of the administration of the colony.

During the progression of these denigrating circumstances a bookseller named Parker visited Beverley during his stay in London with a manuscript he hoped Beverley would help him correct. Beverley tried to revise the manuscript, a section on Virginia for John Oldmixon's *The British Empire in America* but found it "too faulty and too imperfect to be mended," with "some accounts that had been printed 60 or 70 years ago in which also [Oldmixon] had chosen the most strange and untrue parts and left out the more sincere and faithful."⁸ Beverley told Parker that he wanted to put together a more complete and factually accurate account from his own notes on Virginia, stating "and this I should rather undertake in justice to such a fine country, because it has been so misrepresented to the common people of England as to make them believe that the servants in Virginia are meant to draw in cart and plow, as horses and oxen do in England, and the country turns all people black who go to live there, with other such prodigious phantasms."⁹ This statement, dramatic in its frank, exaggerated, and racist language, typifies the finished work that Beverly eventually produced; a damning testimony against those who misrepresented his homeland combined with a strongly biased and anglicized narrative of loving regard for the physical attributes and the potential of the colony. There is also an implicit invitation to entrepreneurs. Beverley presents an image of non-competitive opportunity and abundance in the colony.

⁸ John Oldmixon, *The British empire in America, containing the history of the discovery, settlement, progress and present state of all the British colonies on the ... maps done from the newest surveys* Volume v.2 (Charleston, SC.: Nabu Press, 1741, 2010).

⁹ Louis B. Wright, "Introduction," in Robert Beverley *The History and Present State of Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1947) xvii.

Beverley's work, much of which was used in Oldmixon's volume and first published on its own in 1705, promoted the Virginia colony for European settlement. Even though the author often departed from his main goals with editorials covering a range of subjects: colonial government, historical failures, lazy colonists, idealized Indians, his main objective was to produce a work of imagined possibility for a mainly European, and particularly English, readership. His manuscript underwent translations into French indicating that the book's promotional nature extended to the continent to reach a larger readership and therefore more potential settlers. The content covered almost every imaginable natural detail, appealing to interests as wide-ranging as shipping and winemaking. Beverley used these descriptions to evoke a sense of Englishness within a colonial space, always careful to juxtapose Anglican attributes against indigenous wildlife and peoples. He created an imaginary new Eden, one that invited economic opportunism and entrepreneurship supported by specific English designations that strongly reinforced an Anglican-American identity, continuing into the eighteenth century. He did this using the most sophisticated form of communication of the day, the book.

Richard Brown traces the communication revolution that occurred after the invention of the printing press between 1440-1450. Brown particularly emphasizes the evolving importance of the written word in the eighteenth century through books, newspapers, pamphlets, and periodicals with regard to how it relayed knowledge to individuals ranging from academics to agrarian laborers. Brown argues that the distribution of knowledge through print mediums helped change the political and social

ideologies of the colonies, stressing the reading public's expectations about the types of publications that were produced and distributed. Thus, the publishing industry influenced the reading public's perception of the world but also responded to the market by anticipating and popularizing the types of printed materials to which the public reacted most favorably. Much of these materials included travel narratives, atlases, maps, and studies of indigenous cultures. As a result, a redefinition of spatial and geographical concepts occurred allowing for a more fluid understanding of regional and colonial geographies. Combining geographical concerns with ideological, political, and religious printed material, this eurocentric understanding of the wider world translated to knowledge and power.¹⁰

Printing in England

Publishing represented one of the first forms of capitalist endeavor. The industry from 1500 on lay under the control of prosperous investors concerned with profit and the

¹⁰ Richard D. Brown, *Knowledge is Power: the Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1991) 3. For works on the history and significance of the book in Europe see Robert Darnton "What is the History of Books?" *The Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991); Nicholas Barker, *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society: The Clark Lectures, 1986-1987* (New Castle, DE.: Oak Knoll Press, 2001); Roger Chartier, *the Order of Books: Readers, Authors and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1994); Peter D. McDonald, *Making Meaning: Printers of the Mind and Other Essays (Studies in Print Culture and the History of the Book)* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002); Harold Love, *The Culture and Commerce of Texts: Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Amherst, Mass.: University of Massachusetts Press, 1993); Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980) and *Divine Art, Infernal Machine: The Reception of Printing in the West from First Impressions to the Sense of an Ending* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011); Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1992); Robert Gross, "Print and the Public Sphere in Early America" in *The State of U.S. History*, Melvyn Stokes, ed. (London: Bloomsbury Academic Press, 2002). See also Lisa Jardine's *Worldly Goods: A New History of the Renaissance* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998).

search for the most popular and saleable items. At the invention of the printing press in the middle of the fifteenth century England's economy held little influence in Europe and what little influence it had came from wool and cloth manufacture. The trend toward new intellectual pursuits that transformed Italy and parts of northwestern Europe came late to Britain with only the narrowest of markets for works of classical and theological merit. Manuscripts proved difficult to come by because in this period England remained off the major European trade routes. England's first successful printer, William Caxton, set up his press in 1476 and published roughly one hundred works before his death, mostly of a romantic nature, including *The Canterbury Tales*, *Morte d'Arthur*, and *Aesop's Fables*. These works were usually printed through contributions from wealthy patrons such as the Earl of Arundal who ordered several copies of Caxton's edition of the *Golden Legend* and paid Caxton one buck and one doe annually for his service.¹¹

England's struggling printing industry in the sixteenth century could not compete with Europe's established presses. In 1500 Europe's largest firm, Nuremberg's Anthoni Koberger, employed over one hundred workers to complete the printing of numerous bibles and theological works. Koberger operated agencies in Frankfurt, Paris and Lyons and maintained a distribution that included the Netherlands, France, Italy, Austria, Poland and England. Seventy-one towns in Italy had printers. German towns had fifty in total, France thirty-six, Spain twenty-six. England's efforts to establish printing forms only allowed four presses up to 1500, with the most prestigious, Oxford University Press,

¹¹ Marjorie Plant, *The English Book Trade: An Economic History of the Making and Sale of Books* (London: George Allen and Unwin LTD, 1939, 1974) 25-26.

failing twice before finding traction in the sixteenth century. The Tudor period witnessed anxiety over foreign ideas in printed material form which might be viewed by authorities as seditious. With this fear came measures to assert government control over printers. European political developments may have limited printers as to what they could produce, but it also allowed for surer footing in England and a protective umbrella under which to compete more effectively against European markets. The criteria of what Tudor authority deemed acceptable and unacceptable as publishable print material in England allowed for the industry to establish a more definite idea of what it could produce to compete with the dominant markets of Europe. As a result, English printers yielded a steadily increasing output of belle letters and government approved theological works continuing into the middle of the seventeenth century.¹²

The second half of the seventeenth century brought significant changes and volatility to the English printing industry. The rise of the unlicensed printing press due to loosened government oversight caused a glut in poorly conceived and produced materials by small printers seeking to profit from demand for political pamphlets and newsheets. Workmanship suffered, and by the last decades of the century more restrictive government impositions compounded by the devastation of the plague and the fire of London hobbled printers and booksellers in England. The fire of 1666 is particularly instructive, both regarding the destruction of printed material in London as well the importance that printed material had taken in the fabric of English culture. Samuel Pepys,

¹² Plant, *The English Book Trade*, 31.

who attempted to save essential published works during the fire described the eyewitness account of an acquaintance in a quote that underscores the prominence books and pamphlets held in the fabric of English culture and economy. Pepys particularly identifies the financial burden accrued by London booksellers. He wrote, “By Mr. Dugsdale I hear the great loss of books in St. Paul’s churchyard and at their hall also which they value at about £150,000. Some booksellers being wholly undone.”¹³ Another acquaintance’s father lost his personal library totaling £1,000 including “one newly printed, a discourse, it seems, of courts.”¹⁴ These accounts told of the devastation to the bookseller’s market due partly to the flammability of its wares, but also the growth the publishing industry had seen in two centuries.

Inventories of sellers and personal libraries signify the demand, and thus the profitability, of printed material in England that continued into the eighteenth century. Books became luxury items, symbols of status, and proof that now an educated elite existed in England as it had in Italy and Germany two centuries previous. Pepys further emphasized the ubiquity of books in English upper-class society by relating the employment of a carpenter to build bookshelves to “put my books up in: they are now growing numerous, and lying one upon the another on my chairs, I lose the use to remove the trouble of removing them, when I would open a book.”¹⁵ In addition to religious and political doctrine, topics regarding physical and natural science began to play a large role

¹³ Samuel Pepys, February 4, 1666, *Diary and Correspondence of Samuel Pepys: Secretary to the Admiralty in the Reign of Charles II and James II*, vols. I-IV John D. Morris and Company, 1906) vol. III, 56.

¹⁴ Pepys, September, 26, 1666, *Diary and Correspondence*, vol. II, 460.

¹⁵ Pepys, July 23, 1666, *Diary and Correspondence*, vol. II, 418.

in print culture in the seventeenth century. This proliferation of scientific tracts and studies that informed the Scientific Revolution in Europe supplied a hungry reading public with books that described natural discoveries, culminating in English institutions, such as the Royal Society, that would significantly promote scientific expeditions and the publication of findings.

As England's foreign trade and colonization in the West and East Indies grew new books and tracts on economics became popular during the seventeenth century. The curiosity of the reading public about the new geographical spheres that England's economy now reached prompted a demand that allowed for works that could tempt potential investors, entrepreneurs and emigrants. Combined with works produced to satisfy the clamor for scientific knowledge these materials encouraged English imaginations to wonder at the prospects of the new frontier offered in places like North America, the Caribbean, and the East Indies. Thomas Mun's short description of trade to the East Indies in the table of contents of his 1621 work *A Discourse in Trade from England into the East-Indies* provides an example of the economic aims of work such as his. Mun announces, "In the first part is showed the necessary use of drugs, spices, Indigo, Raw-Silk, and Calicos. In the second part is declared the great sums of ready monies which are yearly saved to Christendom in general, by fetching the wares of the East Indies directly from shipping from thence." This work set the tone for English commerce in the seventeenth century by simultaneously providing lists of products and prices of East Indian markets and championing ventures in the name of profit for the East India Company and the Crown. Works that focused on economic potential rose to

prominence, appearing on bookshelves on both sides of the Atlantic alongside religious philosophical tracts. They significantly influenced the growth of Empire by providing access of information to its active participants.¹⁶ Beverley continued this promotional mission of works such as Mun's by offering examples of material exploitation in the Virginia colonial setting.

Print Culture in Chesapeake Virginia

Print material also represented the main vehicle with which the Tidewater gentry maintained their identification with the English social landscape. Much of Virginia in the early eighteenth century perceived itself as an outpost of English culture. The 3,000 mile gulf that separated the Virginia colony from its mother country reinforced this ideal even as British economic and communication channels were expanding throughout the Atlantic. Information networks, relying on printed and handwritten materials, became lifelines for identifying with British social, political, and religious sensibilities, bolstering a desire to maintain the persona of the English gentleman, even on the remote Virginia frontier. Virginians worked to influence these channels of communication by using commercial and familial connections to request the type of printed materials that would tether them more securely to England's cultural sphere. In a physical environment very different than that of London and its surrounding counties, and with occupations which often required more arduous activity than their English counterparts, Tidewater gentry

¹⁶ Thomas Mun, *A Discourse of Trade from England into the East-Indies* originally printed for Nicholas Oates for John Pyper, London, 1621 (New York: The Facsimile Text Society, 1930) 1.

employed English print material to assure themselves that they were not drifting away into an unknown domain in which they had less tools for self-identification.¹⁷

The initial goal of many of the immigrant gentry, such as William Byrd I, in the late seventeenth century was to build their reputations as English elite in a colonial setting. Many became involved in colonial administration which entailed decisions and actions specific to the circumstances of the colony, but with attention to English processes of governance that did not always tailor to Virginia's distinct conditions. This physical and political environment prompted many transplanted gentry to look to England for assurance that civilization was still intact 3,000 miles away. As a result, often the planters who could afford it journeyed to England under the pretext of business, for the chance to enjoy English social life and re-familiarize themselves with English culture, often buying books to bring back to the colony. Many tidewater planters employed connections in Britain to secure a place at English schools for their children, but trips to England were usually a one or two time occurrence for the adult Virginian with the means to undertake it. In the long years between transatlantic journeys, print material provided the ties that allowed for continued self-identification as subjects of the realm.¹⁸

¹⁷ Brown, *Knowledge*, 43.

¹⁸ Brown, *Knowledge*, 44. For studies on Anglican identity in the Chesapeake and colonial Virginia see: Dell Upton, *Holy Things and Profane: Anglican Parish Churches in Colonial Virginia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Lauren F. Wenner, *A Cheerful and Comfortable Faith: Anglican Religious Practice in the Elite Households of Eighteenth-Century Virginia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010); Darrett B. Rutman, Anita H. Rutman, *A Place in Time: Middlesex County, Virginia, 1650-1750* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1986) Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and*

This is demonstrated through descriptions of how colonial Virginians often exhibited compulsive obsession when anticipating the arrival of news from the mother country. The lifeblood for the delivery of letters and printed materials to and from the Chesapeake were the trade networks of the Atlantic. This was particularly so with the tobacco fleet which not only brought books, periodicals, and letters, but a variety of materials exhibiting England's cultural values in items such as glassware, porcelain, fabrics, furniture, and wallpapers. Personal letters, however, remained the most precious item to be shipped because they not only brought vital news from colleagues, family, and friends, but they also highlighted business concerns vital to the anxious and often overextended businessmen of the Chesapeake gentry. Business correspondences often included descriptions of political affairs so that a single letter might relay changing political climates while simultaneously bringing fresh news of a planter's investments or tobacco profits. Offloaded correspondence packets might meet with a frantic wharf side opening of letters as William Byrd II described when he wrote, "then we tear open the letters they bring us from our friends, as eagerly as a greedy heir tears open a rich father's will."¹⁹ The arrival of the tobacco fleet signaled enough excitement due to its carrying of news from England that it became habit for it to fire its cannons to announce its arrival in port. Sitting assemblies and county court rooms suspended business in order to let officials read their vital news from abroad.²⁰

Anxious Patriarch: Race and Power in Colonial Virginia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

¹⁹ William Byrd, *The Secret Diary of William Byrd*, Louis B. Wright, ed. (Petersburg, VA.: The Dietz Press, 1941) 49.

²⁰ Brown, *Knowledge*, 45.

Aside from the immediacy of personal letters from family and associates, print material in the form of books and journals maintained a prominence as a permanent signifier of luxury and erudition for the literate colonial gentry. Although the importation of books still lacked predictability and consistency, the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century laid the groundwork for the proliferation of colonial libraries when prominent gentry such as Byrd I and Robert Beverley sought to reconcile their English heritage with the rusticity of Chesapeake life in part by employing English print material.²¹ Periodicals such as the *Tatler*, and *Spectator*, along with books on an ever growing array of subjects, mingled with personal and business correspondence in the libraries, parlors, and drawing rooms of the colonial Virginia elite. Relegated mostly to the wealthiest of Virginia's gentry, printed material nonetheless provided the patriarchal class with touchstones of English identity. Books included current and classic volumes of English literature, philosophy, politics, and history. Knowledge and ownership of popular volumes allowed planters cosmopolitan access to an English identity which they demonstrated in their letters home and in London's parlors on the occasion of a transatlantic journey. This element added to Chesapeake planter life expanded into the eighteenth century eventually allowing planters such as Byrd's son to house a library with thousands of volumes at his home at Westover.²²

²¹ David D. Hall, "Learned Culture in the Seventeenth Century," in *A History of the Book in America, vol. I, the Colonial Book in the Atlantic World*, Hugh Amory, David D. Hall eds. (Chapel Hill: University of Chapel Hill Press, 2007) 411.

²² Brown, *Knowledge*, 47.

Contrasting the prevalence of books as a symbol of status and self-identification for wealthy Chesapeake planters is the relatively small amount of books non-elite colonists owned. A study of household libraries in the seventeenth century reveals the stratification between wealthy book collectors and the average home. David Hall analyzed the typical household book inventory found in three prominent Chesapeake counties, Surry, York, and St. Mary's. Household libraries, if there was one, were usually tiny. Of the homes that owned books at all many had fewer than five. Only one in eight of the inventories Hall itemized contained ten or more books, most of these belonging to local clergymen. The most cited title in the known inventories was the Bible, with other titles containing subjects relating to protestant works of devotion, psalters, psalm books and the Book of Common Prayer. A small number were secular manuals focusing on a particular skill. Even with evidence of these inventories, Hall notes that more than half of the households in the counties he studied owned no books at all.²³

Although not widespread, reading culture in the late seventeenth-century Chesapeake predicted a dynamic, if not informal, economy of knowledge in the following century. Until the middle of the eighteenth century most of the libraries of learned culture reflected modest inventories of under 100 volumes. John Carter, who died in 1659 left only sixty titles to his son. The 1665 inventory of a German physician, George Hack, contained ninety books. Storage, or lack thereof might have been part of the reason for the a limit on inventories, even for elites, as closets cupboards, and storage chests could

²³ David D. Hall, "The Chesapeake in the Seventeenth Century," in *A History of the Book*, vol. I, 119.

be lacking and only allow for the most essential titles. To offset the limits of a finite amount of personally owned books colonists sometimes relied on lending amongst each other. William Fitzhugh borrowed Rushworth's *Historical Collections* in 1682. Passing on printed news and periodicals also supplied an informal print distribution that allowed literate colonists to inform themselves of news abroad.²⁴

Ordering directly from printers through agents or acquaintance proved to be more haphazard and unpredictable, but allowed for specification of particular titles. William Byrd I employed an agent to act as informal shopper in England to procure books on natural science. George Hack may have used a tobacco merchant to receive a supply of the *London Gazette*, and Fitzhugh ordered specific school books for his sons as well as books for himself directly from a London book seller. Like the book inventories of the population at large, the largest percentage of titles in libraries in this category of book owner dealt with religious subjects. After these titles which allowed for the appropriate devotion to God, a typical library could contain works on medicine, law, navigation, and horticulture as well as plays, satires, and romances.²⁵

Beverley particularly demonstrates the type of planter influenced by reading works of current and classical origin, a type of leaning that would serve him as he defined his authorship role. His education in England, as with many of his peers, provided an

²⁴ Hall, "Thee Chesapeake," *A History*, vol. 1, 119.

²⁵ Hall, *A History of the Book*, vol. 1, 128-130. For a typical inventory of a planter's library see "Library of Col. William Fleming" *William and Mary Quarterly* (1) Vol. 6, 158. The library's owner was a generation removed from Beverley, but the contents of his bookshelves are instructive to an understanding of the range of subjects important to an elite Virginian.

introduction to classical literature that he carried back to Virginia. His early occupation as a scrivener would allow him to develop his written skills which served as a qualification in his capacity as clerk in the colonies. As clerk, Beverley was particularly poised to become a writer of Virginia history having practical knowledge of the colony's political proceedings and the skills with which to provide a particular account of Virginia's past and present. His time in England also allowed him to form ideas about the desires of English readers and identify trends and moods among London's growing publishing industry. With the intention of easing readers' weariness of exaggerated tales of travel in and around the New World Beverley writes in his preface to *The History and Present State of Virginia*, "Tis agreed that travelers are of all men, the most suspected of insincerity; this does not only hold, in their private conversations; but likewise in the *Grand Tours* with which they pester the public, and break the bookseller." Beverley goes on to assail travel writers, especially the French, who, to Beverley, employ, "the strong genius of that nation to hyperbole and romance."²⁶ The fact that Beverley not only read enough of these works to comment on them, but that he was familiar enough with the genre to critique it as a whole, demonstrates that he cultivated an invested interest in reinventing the form with attention to his idea of accuracy, simplicity of style, but with the customary aim of creating an alluring portrait to promote settlement and economic activity in Virginia.

²⁶ Robert Beverley, *The History and Present State of Virginia* (Chapel Hill Press: University of Chapel Hill Press, 2013) 7.

Meanings and Motivations of *The History*

At the end of the seventeenth century books increasingly focused on national identification, and this quality extended to colonial peripheries. The colony acted as an outpost of the state, and chroniclers of the social and natural conditions of these regions emphasized the improvements that the colonizing nation brought to them, assigning European meanings and symbols for the purpose of self-identification in often drastically different environments from their mother countries. Eighteenth-century writers depicted the New World as spaces for Europeanization, inviting the transfer of national identity to take hold on a perceived, natural, *tabula rasa*. These objectives took their form most significantly in works of promotional literature, where authors demonstrated the projects of creating mirror states in the wilderness, states that aspired to imitate and identify with their country-of-origin. Beverley demonstrates this quality of colonial literature by constantly reminding the reader of sustained English norms working within a controlled colonial environment.

His main purpose of creating a work describing the history and conditions of colonial Virginia was to promote its possibility for economic opportunity, either for the settler or investor. Colonial spaces offered the prospect of commodities in a very broad presentation, and authors and publishers recognized the specific opportunistic appeal that these works brought to a reading public. From the beginning, works on Virginia represented the largest, most varied, and most embellished promotional canon in the English language. The colony's difficult beginnings as the earliest permanent English colony made it suitable for a survival narrative that played up the stamina and

determination of its early administrators. Promotional works leading up to Beverley's often promoted missionary and imperialist objectives, appealing to the notions of nobility in an effort to attract investment and settlement by gentry during the period of the Virginia Company. Through the seventeenth century the promotional tracts shifted the attention to include the goal of attracting continental European emigrants to Virginia and the Carolinas, often borrowing or copying directly from previous promotional works. These tracts attempted to spur settlement investment by convincing emigrants, planters, and merchants of the importance of colonization as a catalyst for economic enterprise.²⁷

Beverley's history contributed to the new permanency of place regarding British America. His topics vary from chronological history, geographical features, Indian life and society, natural resources, and government administration. He often places himself as a central figure in the narrative, especially when describing the natural world. Highlighting the author, who was born in Virginia, among the backdrop of vivid natural descriptions and indigenous peoples allows for the re-emergence of an English colonial identity. He also established himself as a participatory eyewitness who relies on first-hand experiences to report his observations. Along with descriptions of history and government, Beverley is recreating an imagined community which privileges its Anglican participants. Juxtaposing wandering inquisitive Englishness with the colony's noble yet primitive inhabitants further solidified a community identity that worked in and around indigenous communities and environments, but still held them apart as a national curiosity.

²⁷ Parrish, *The History*, xxxi-xxxii.

Claiming Beverley created or reinvented an identity based strictly on his own field work and experiences ignores the many previous manuscripts from which the author drew directly or indirectly. Beverley himself claimed that one of the main purpose of writing the history was to set the record straight after the publication of many erroneous reports and narratives presented “the idols of fake knowledge.” John Banister’s natural history manuscript especially suffered from plagiarism not only by Beverley but by William Byrd II, John Oldmixon, and Nathaniel Crouch. *The History* employs Banister mainly in its description of Indian practices, of which Beverley may not have experienced firsthand. But Beverley also uses Banister’s description of wildlife to fill in the natural environment surrounding him in the eyewitness passages. This is a rhetorical tool used to establish Beverley as a typical empirical and authoritative observer, as well as portray the English gentleman in an intricate relationship with his natural surroundings resembling a New World Garden of Eden.²⁸

Modern historians have criticized Beverley for using century old information, especially about Indians, in his work. Thomas Hariot and John Smith wrote accounts based on observations taken in the years directly before and after the founding of Jamestown. The presence of Powhatan, Nottoway, and Meherrin that Hariot and Smith wrote of had diminished to isolated communities by the time Beverley published his work. Indians, by Beverley’s time, had either taken up in isolated pockets of resistance to Anglicization, or adopted Anglican characteristics and assimilated into what increasingly

²⁸ Parrish, *The History*, xxxi. John Banister, *John Banister and his natural history of Virginia, 1678-1692* (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1970).

became a race-based hierarchy which kept Indians and slaves at the bottom. *The History* presents an indigenous culture that is for the most part peaceful, distinct in its own traditional social and cultural mores. Beverley's reliance on information a century or more old (Hariot published his work in 1590) strategically allows for an antiquated view of Indians as the wild, innocent, unassimilated inhabitants of an unspoiled Eden. Presenting Indians in their current state as assimilationists and isolated raiders would not have presented as dramatic a juxtaposition of the taming English gentleman against an untamed but opportunity filled backdrop. Thus, Beverley consciously picked and chose his sources and influences to produce a caricature of the Englishman as both English and Native, showing that prospective settlers and investors could expect ample material to become "natives of the colony" but retain the status and characteristics of Englishmen.²⁹

Glaringly absent from *The History* are descriptions of what had become by Beverley's time a slave society. The slave code of 1705, the year *The History* was published, further entrenched the evolving race-based hierarchy, allowing comprehensive protection for the interests of slave owners, as well as all white people, from the actions of slaves. The code allowed for swift and severe punishments for slave felonies including whipping, burning the hand of someone accused of stealing, and hanging for non-violent petty theft. These demonstrations of public punishment and execution revealed the power the colony could now exert towards its captive population. In addition, the code eliminated the prospect that Christianization could be used as a means of manumission.

²⁹ Thomas Hariot, *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007); John Smith, *Captain John Smith: Writings with Other Narratives of Roanoke, Jamestown, and the First English Settlement of America* (New York: Library of America, 2007).

Interracial sex, especially between a white woman and a black man, became illegal. If the relationship resulted in an offspring, the child received thirty years of servitude and his mother five years of servitude or a £15 fine.³⁰

Beverley's *History* does not include these codes or the preceding series of laws that led to them. He does address some conditions of servitude, probably due to the fact that the *History* was a promotional work in part aimed at servants and settlers, but his neglect in identifying the increasing power of the state and the firmly established slave society indicates a willful omission. In establishing his pastoral portrait of a wild but romantically benign Eden populated by a resourceful indigenous population and administered by an Anglican government, Beverley wishes to obscure the fact that Virginia had become a hierarchical, race-based colony. In a society where difference determined social status, opportunity, servitude or slavery, Beverley still strove to create an image based on falsified notions of Virginia and a people elevated by Anglican adaptations to their social and natural environment.

The History

Beverley divides his *History* into four books, each with intentional objectives. The first book traces the colony from its first days of settlement and describes its political administration from that time to the time of the narrative's writing. The second book's subtitle, *The Natural Productions and Conveniences of the Country, Suited to Trade and Improvement*, reveals an intended emphasis on economic possibility. Book III focuses on

³⁰ Kathleen Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996) 350.

Indian culture and customs and the *Present State of the Country, Polity of the Government, and Improvement of the Land*. These book titles convey a twofold illusion of evolving administrative stability and economic opportunity. The table of contents sets the tone for a narrative that is meant to convey a land of abundance and possibility supported by a sanctioning governing body.

Beverley begins, in his preface, by questioning the credibility of earlier works, most particularly those produced by the French. He dismisses the popular genre of travel literature of which he claims, “they pester the public, and break the bookseller.” French writers are most guilty, giving in to the “genius of that nation to hyperbole and romance.” In contrast, “the English, it must be granted invent more within the compass of probability, and are contented to be less ornamental, while they are more sincere.” In setting up this stylistic rivalry within the first paragraph, Beverley sets the tone of a work meant for imperial aims. The French, the emerging European opponent to English imperial aims, represent exaggerated and embellished falsehood, the English, prudent conservatism and factual accuracy. Beverley immediately establishes his as a rebuttal to the superficiality of England’s imperial rival.³¹

To further emphasize his humble sincerity Beverley identifies himself not as an Englishman but as an Indian. Beverley’s claim, “I am an Indian,” is not a complete refutation of his English heritage, but an assertion that by being raised in the colony he is more suited to employ a judicious and experienced eye of a native than an impressionistic traveler. In stating “I hope the plainness of my dress, will give [the reader] the kinder

³¹ Beverley, *The History*, 7.

impression of my honesty, which is what I pretend to” Beverley conveys a sense of personal permanence that is meant to connect the reader to an authentic colonial voice. Truth, Beverley asserts, “desires only to be understood, and never affects the reputation of being finely equipped. It depends on its own intrinsic value, and, like beauty, is rather concealed than set off by ornament.” The first three paragraphs of Beverley’s *History* establish two major precedents. Firstly, it sets England apart from her imperial rivals as being steady and measured in the conveyance and implementation of her imperial aims and secondly it characterizes the author as both a participant and slight outlier to the imperial project.³² ‘

At the end of the preface, in which he briefly describes the four parts of his work, Beverley remarks that he has produced a “bill of fare.” By describing his introduction in this way he further alludes to categories of opportunities for readers to pursue and choose from like items from a menu. The metaphor of consumable commodities is not an accident, although the author claims that the work should be read simply as “a tolerable entertainment.” Presenting his subjects as commodities allows the reader not only to contemplate the difference of colonial life and environment but to provoke a response where readers might imagine participating in that world themselves. In three pages of text Beverley subtly produces an introduction to the economic opportunities from which he has profited.³³

³² Beverley, *The History*, 7.

³³ Beverley, *The History*, 9.

In Book I Beverley chronicles the founding of the colony of Roanoke, entering it into the narrative of European settlement in which the Spanish gained “immense profits,” from “a small settlement or two thereon made.” The account gives emphasis to the first English explorers impressions of the Atlantic coast from which they “made a good profit of the Indian truck, which they bought for things of much inferior value.” Beverley continues describing the first venture and its accounts as:

representing the country so delightful, and desirable; so pleasant, and plentiful; the climate, and air, so temperate, sweet, and wholesome; the woods, and soil, so charming, and fruitful; and other things so agreeable, that paradise itself seemed to be there, in its first native lustre.³⁴

The use of the word profit three times on the first page of chapter one, combined with numerous superlative adjectives and nouns underscore the objective of the author to present economic opportunity at the start. Beverley paints the primary promoters of this new discovery of opportunity, particularly Sir Walter Raleigh, as undertaken on behalf of England, “discovering to their own advantage.” Of England’s first colony, Beverley is equally laudatory. He describes what has become known as “The Lost Colony” as a “settlement prosperously made, being carried on with much zeal and unanimity among themselves.” He relays how the colony kept peace with their Indian neighbors, but in 1590, after a two-year absence of supply ships, a returning English expedition found no sign of the settlers except a cryptic carving on a tree. Beverley suggests that they were massacred or allowed to starve by disenfranchised Indians. The initial speculation on the

³⁴Beverley, *The History*, 13.

colonists' fate is brief and vague, simply stating that the Indians had "cut them off," allowing for a sense of incidental occurrence rather than a significant failure in England's first attempt at colonization, but being an instance of public record Beverley had to include the event and he later laments the loss of the colony at the hands of greedy prospectors stating, "So strong was the desire of riches, and so eager the pursuit of a rich trade, that all concern for the lives of their fellow Christians, kindred, neighbors and country-men, weighed nothing in the comparison." Here, after celebrating adventurers attempting to mine the opportunity of the New World, Beverley shows that there are limits to the colonial project, one that can turn callously mercenary, especially when the lives and livelihood of English settlers are concerned. Although Beverley promoted the colony as a source of opportunity and economic expansion, he drew the line when the well-being of colonists was threatened by blind greed.³⁵

Beverley then traces the formation and objectives of the Virginia Company and the formation of Jamestown, observing, "The Merchants of London, Bristol, Exeter, and Plymouth, soon perceived what great gains might be made of a trade this way if it were well managed, and colonies could be rightly settled; which was sufficiently evinced by the great profits some ships had made, which had not met with ill accidents." Beverley uses the formation of a joint stock company to emphasize that by minimizing risk to one individual investor, an enterprise had more opportunities to turn a profit. The failure of the Lost Colony hinged on neglect, poor planning, and unfamiliarity of indigenous people and terrain, Beverley suggests, and a more direct supply route and more financial interest

³⁵ Beverley, *The History*, 18-20.

in a new settlement would provide permanence. Again, over-reaching avarice, this time by settlers, threatens the existence of the new settlement on the James River, Jamestown. Beverley writes, “They were no sooner settled in all this happiness and security, but they fell into jars and dissension among themselves, by a greedy grasping at Indian treasures, envying and over-reaching one another in that trade.” Beverley is careful to remind the reader that while economic opportunity is present in abundance in the new colony, that lawlessness and unchecked greed would be its undoing. A mix of management and industry could allow for the qualities of greed to be checked, a strong administration could protect the interests of both the colonists and the crown.³⁶

Therefore, it is logical that Beverley would spend the remainder of Book I describing the evolution of Virginia’s colonial government through the dissolution of the Virginia Company in 1624 to the time of his writing his manuscript in 1704. His assessment of Virginia’s progression to a colonial administration containing an executive office, a council, and a representative body is frank in its critique of governors’ successes and failures. Always, Beverley keeps his ideas for the well-being of the colony at the forefront of his commentary. Laws and decisions by administrators are assessed in terms of setbacks to the management of the colony and therefore the protection of geographical and economic growth.

Governors represent the physical embodiment of what Beverley see as protectors of or detractors from the stability of the colony. Beverley is harshly critical of Sir John Harvey, Governor from 1628 to 1639, for allowing the economically threatening

³⁶ Beverley, *The History*, 21.

formation of Maryland, finally describing the Governor as a tyrant. In Beverley's words, "the good and just Sir William Berkeley" succeeded Harvey, discontinuing unjust land grants to greedy prospectors and encouraging entrepreneurial enterprise in the gathering, manufacture, or planting of potash, soap, salt, flax, hemp, silk, and cotton. Beverley also commends Berkeley for his relationship with Indians whom he claims the governor showed "all the respect and tenderness imaginable." Berkeley, in Beverley's description, also carried himself commendably during Bacon's Rebellion, dying in England with the King's affection.³⁷

Beverley was not so kind to Berkeley's successor Thomas Culpepper who he described as having the "art of mixing the good of the country with his own particular interest, which was a sure means of getting them passed." His worst offense in Beverley's eyes "imposed a penalty of five hundred pounds, and a year's imprisonment, upon any man that shall presume to speak disrespectful of the governor." Beverley, in republican rhetoric, responds to this description by claiming, "this is such a safeguard to tyranny, that, let a governor commit never so many abuses, no person, while he is there, dare say a word against him; not so much as go about to represent it to the throne of England for redress, for fear of incurring this severe penalty." Again, Beverley is equating abuse of power and over-reaching greed as instruments of tyranny and enemies to the freedoms of the colony. Whether it is neglectful expedition leaders and suppliers, greedy settlers grasping at Indian trade, or tyrannical governors abusing their power for personal gain,

³⁷ Beverley, *The History*, 46.

the recurring theme of careful and restrained managements as a mutual partner to economic opportunity persists throughout Book I of *The History*.³⁸

The worst offender of the succession of executives in Beverley's frank assessment governed (as Lt. Governor) during the time Beverley wrote his manuscript. Initial descriptions by Beverley seem to convey Francis Nicholson as just the kind of promoter of industry that the author would applaud. He set up a subscription system for the support of the colony and started it with a large personal contribution encouraging London merchants to do likewise. He passed acts to encourage linen manufacture, leather-making, tanning, and shoe-making. He oversaw the passage of laws that would promote towns (a particular pet project of Beverley's) and general improvement of trade. But to Beverley honorable character secured a governor's reputation with the colony's gentry and Nicholson did not possess this attribute. In the council Nicholson demonstrated a character that betrayed an "arbitrary and imperious" nature. So much that the council "could not bear it, and several of the councilors wrote letters to the court of England against him." By the next assembly, Nicholson appears to have retracted his ideas about progress for the colony. He "tacked about, and was quite reverse of what he was in the first. Instead of encouraging ports and towns, he spread abroad his dislike of them; and went among the people, finding fault with those things which he and the assembly had unanimously agreed upon the preceding session."³⁹

³⁸ Beverley, *The History* 74.

³⁹ Beverley, *The History*, 76.

The crown removed Nicholson from office in 1692, but reinstated him in 1698 as Lieutenant Governor under the absence governorship of George Hamilton, Earl of Orkney. Beverley again assesses the chief administrator in terms of abuses of office and flaws in character. Nicholson, in Beverley's telling, supported public works such as the founding of William and Mary College only for personal gain using "this pretext for so many by-ends that at last the promoters of that good work grew weary of the mockery." Nicholson's removal of the capital from Jamestown to Middle-Plantation, renamed Williamsburg, also came under harsh scrutiny from Beverley. "This imaginary city," Beverley writes, "is yet advanced no further than only to have a few public houses and a store house, more than were built upon the place before." Compounding Nicholson's faults in administration was his attitude toward prominent members of the colony that often revealed a "pompous show of zeal." According to Beverley, Nicholson, who had once held a position in Morocco, informed a meeting of the Board of Governors of the College "That they were dogs, and their wives bitches; that he knew how to govern the Moors, and he would beat them into better manners." The council were not exempted from Nicholson's temper either, Beverley describes how an argumentative council received responses of "outrageous passions" from Nicholson, illuminating any process of debate, and rendering the advisory board to the Governor useless.

One of the most egregious of Nicholson's actions involved the lifeline of Atlantic communications, letters from abroad. As stated earlier in the chapter colonists awaited letters and dispatches with compulsive anxiety, crowding the docks when the tobacco fleet that brought them arrived. A sitting assembly stopped proceedings to receive, read,

and reread letters and business reports from around the Atlantic world. In similar fashion, colonists sent letters back on ships with business instructions, reports on the progress of the colony, and most importantly, family news. In an effort to eliminate any correspondence that would criticize his governance Nicholson instituted “a practice most destructive to all trade and correspondence, which is the intercepting, and breaking open of letters. His method was to give directions to some of his creatures dwelling near the mouths of the rivers, to send on board the several ships, that happened to arrive, and in the Governor’s name, demand the letters.” Beverley laments this action as the greatest sin of all. He writes, “By this management many people have not only suffered the loss of their letters, and of their accounts, in voices etc., but likewise have missed great advantages for want of timely advice, occasioned by the stopping of letters.” Tyranny in the form of censorship combined with an abrupt interruption of business, to Beverley’s mind, represents a severe threat to the orderly, enterprising community he imagined. Beverley’s passage emphasizes the importance of the economy of knowledge and his abhorrence to those who would interrupt its vital employment in the colony.⁴⁰

Apart from the very large axe Beverley grinds, his assessment of governors past and present repeats his theme that tyranny is an anathema to economic growth and free enterprise. To Beverley, Harvey, Effingham, and Nicholson represent officials who used their positions to manipulate colonial projects to their own gain and not the gain of the colonists. Their actions stagnated or even impeded the progress of the colony. Beverley was not so much of an opportunist to engage in or endorse these practices, and he

⁴⁰ Beverley, *The History*, 79, 80.

constantly weaves a theme of anti-tyranny through the first book, playing to anti-monarchical moods of a post-Revolution English reading public. His position as clerk allowed him ample access to all of the events that he relays. He enjoyed a particularly intimate vantage-point from which to view the contentious proceedings of the assemblies. This point-of-access, combined with his candid opinions, provides a particularly vivid picture of the actions of governors who, in Beverley's mind, abused their power to the detriment of the colony.

Beverley viewed the colony as a territory of imagined possibility. His audience, Englishmen living in the post-revolutionary nation (and potential French emigrants) were becoming more and more familiar with anti-tyranny, pro-republic messages. Producing indictments of dictatorial leadership that censored legislative bodies and halted the flow of correspondence allowed Beverley to introduce threats to an imperial aim not from French or Indian enemies, but enemies from within the empire itself.

The title of Book II of *The History* is "Of the Natural Products and Conveniences of Virginia; in its Unimproved State before the English went tither." The word "Products" could mean resources to supply survival on the frontier, but also implies trade items, either commodified by settlers or received from Indian traders. Beverley emphasizes that the descriptions relay the colony in its "unimproved state," away from established plantations and the Jamestown/ Williamsburg settlements. "Unimproved" also evokes possibility, an unspoiled Eden inviting improvement at the hands of immigrants. Book I's title, simply "The History and Present State of Virginia," conveys a more general expectation to the reader, that this is an account of how the colony began,

the progression of events from that time to the present, and its current state of political affairs. With the more descriptive title of Book II, Beverley lures the reader into a natural environment that provides the backdrop for the imagined community of opportunity he wishes to convey.

Beverley sets out to show how water sources are the lifeblood of the colony's geographical advantages. He begins with conditions for shipping, describing the colony's convenient waterway, the Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake, at its mouth, is approximately 24.5 miles across, and Beverley states that it resembles a river in that it "runs into the land about two hundred miles." The Chesapeake opens the interior to shipping trade, and the coast is also conducive to ships that sound off its shores where fair weather all year round leaves them undisturbed. Using language that is highly promotional, Beverley asserts, "A bolder and safer coast is not known in the Universe; to which conveniences, there's the addition of good anchorage all along upon it, without the capes." If a traveler carried any anxiety about his or her ship casting upon shore (a common condition on transoceanic sea voyages) Beverley's description would set them at ease. Easily navigable waterways encouraged potential for investment in shipping as well, with broad access to the interior and predictable winds. Beverley underscores why the Chesapeake offered economic opportunity through easy sea travel.⁴¹

Rivers provide even more inland access, and Beverley states, "The country is watered with four great rivers: The James, York, Rappahannock, and Potomac Rivers; all of which are full of convenient and safe harbors." Besides providing travel routes, the

⁴¹ Beverley, *The History*, 90-91.

rivers of Virginia combine with “chrystal springs of cool and pleasant water,” making the “river water fresh fifty, threescore, and sometimes a hundred miles below the flux and reflux of the tides.” The springs and creeks in the interior offer moving water sufficient enough to supply “as many mills as they can find work for: and some of these send forth such a glut of water, that in less than half a mile below the fountain-head, they afford a stream sufficient to supply a grist-mill; of which there are several instances.” Beverley allows for the reader to imagine an inexhaustible flow of fresh water that could propel millwheels, supply farms, and provide limitless drinking water for settlers and livestock. Freshwater rivers and streams are the channels to bring prosperity, security, and opportunity to prospective settlers, according to Beverley’s description.⁴²

Soil is no less promising. “The soil,” Beverley states, “is of such variety, according to the difference of situation, that one part or other of it, seems fitted to every sort of plant, that is requisite either for the benefit or pleasure of mankind.” Beverley goes so far as to claim that if not for snowfall, mainly in the mountains, that the soil could support “those delicious summer fruits, growing in the hotter climates.” Any fruit that the settler gathers is easily preserved to “gratify a moderate luxury.” Land at the mouth of the rivers contains “mould,” a fertile topsoil suitable for growing rice, hemp, and corn, although there are “veins of a cold, hungry, sand soil, of the same moisture, and very often lying underwater.” But even with this unpromising soil Beverley finds possibility “for on such land generally grow the huckleberries, cranberries, chincapins, etc.” Further up the rivers, Beverley explains, the ground is level and filled with streams and springs.

⁴² Beverley, *The History*, 91.

Soil is “black, fat, and thick laid supporting chestnuts and oaks and well suited to grazing livestock.” Fruit and timber trees populate the piedmont with “very rich ground” containing a “greater variety of soil of which judgement may be made, by the plants and herbs that grow upon it.” An abundant supply of rivers, creeks, and marshes allow for support of livestock.⁴³

As with Beverley’s designation of bodies of water as catalysts for commerce and opportunity, he does not merely describe the geographical land features but puts them into categories of fertility and potential. He is outwardly calling for improvement from settlers to use the land for sustenance and potential entrepreneurship. He invites potential immigrants to recognize the numerous possibilities afforded by such a diverse growing environment. From experience and previous accounts, he displays a mastery of the terrain but always with the image of gradual settlement and economic growth as his theme. He addresses the three most vital elements to a prospective agrarian settlement: temperate climate, abundant water sources, and fertile soil.

Minerals offer another strong lure to a prospective immigrant entrepreneur. Iron and lead could source a metal industry that may eliminate the need to import from Europe. Beverly suggests gold still might be found in abundance, as well as semi-precious stones and crystals. These minerals represent a prospect somewhat separate from the idea of farming and Beverley may have intended them for potential investors who

⁴³ Beverley, *The History*, 93.

could profit from them. Beverley writes as enthusiastically about the colony's limited mineral resources as he does about the much more abundant fertile soil and fresh water.⁴⁴

Beverley's chapter on fruit reveals a deep personal interest in agricultural opportunities, especially in the category of viticulture. After lengthy passages about successful pitted fruits such as the Indian plum that some *vertuosi* make into an agreeable beer, varieties of berries and nuts, Beverley turns his attention to grapes. Beverley's interest in wine surfaces again in Book IV, Chapter XXII, when he describes his own attempts at vine-planting. He states that:

Indeed my curiosity the last year caused me to lay some of the white muscadine, which come of a stock removed thither from England, and they increased by this method to Admiration: I likewise set several slips of the cuttings of the same vine, and the major part of the sets bore grapes in perfection the first year. I remember I had seven full bunches from one of them.⁴⁵

Beverley's personal stake in the success of grape vines is also evidenced in his long passage in Book II, Chapter IV. He goes into specific detail about indigenous varieties, the terrain where each grow, the sweetness and bitterness of each, their growing season, and the quality of wine made from those suitable. He also describes the history of wine-making efforts in Virginia and Carolina, claiming that French merchants attempted planting but used loamy soil near pine groves that are noxious to grape vines. Successful ventures, such as a French effort in 1622, produced fruit "that they had not heard of the

⁴⁴ Beverley, *The History*, 95.

⁴⁵ Beverley, *The History*, 101-103.

like in any other country.” Beverley equates these Frenchmen’s endeavors to his own and attests to his success with native as well as English imported vines.⁴⁶

This long passage is important not only because it reveals some of Beverley’s own activity in producing products from Virginia soil, but also in regards to his audience. Since later editions of *The History* were published in French, historians have speculated strongly that *The History* functioned to promote immigration and settlement from France. Beverley embodies an early example of a colonial wine connoisseur and he would have been well aware of the importance of wine to French culture. He acknowledges the failure of some wine-growing enterprises in the colonial South, but he offers reasons for those failures and an example of success based on the growing region. He emphasizes the point by claiming first-hand experience with quality grape cultivation and wine-making, going so far as to assert that indigenous and European vines would bear quality fruit in the right conditions and in the right hands.

Book II, focusing on the products of the colony, epitomizes the promotional theme present throughout his entire work. He continually reminds his varied readership of the potential the colony offers, listing the dozens if not hundreds of consumable goods readily available to immigrants. He also tempts larger ventures in mineral mines, naval stores, and shipping, while keeping in mind the prospect of French settlers with detailed accounts of viticulture. Book II’s tone is genteel compared to that of Book I which carried candid criticisms of administrators with the purpose of discrediting tyrannical leadership. Book II is pastoral; practically every natural feature is assigned a virtue. Even

⁴⁶ Beverley, *The History*, 105.

a description of the destructive shipworms found in brackish river beds receive a benign assessment from Beverley, who claims “These worms continue thus upon the water, from their rise in June, until the first great rains, after the middle of July; but after that, do no other damage till the next summer-season, and never penetrate farther than the plank or timber they first fix upon.” Beverley produces an image of a passive landscape ripe for planting and cultivation, enterprise and industry. His goals are clear as he offers his reader the abundance of opportunity.⁴⁷

Book III of *The History* is dedicated solely to Indians, “their Religion, Laws, and Customs, in War and Peace.” As stated previously in this chapter, Beverley borrowed almost exclusively from much earlier works on the subject. A century of displacement, war with the English and each other, and gradual assimilation by some indigenous groups complicated the social order of the image Beverley wished to create. Using imagery and descriptions from a time when Englishmen asserted less influence on Indians allowed Beverley to present a more Edenic portrait of people who English readership very likely viewed as exotic. In language typical of colonial accounts of indigenous populations he describes Indian behavior as innocent and childlike, characterizing them as a cultural curiosity. He assigns these qualities especially to Indian women stating, “The Indian damsels are full of spirit, and from thence are always inspired with mirth and good humor, they are extremely given to laugh, which they do with a grace not to be resisted. The excess of life and fire, which they never fail to have, makes them frolicsome, but without any real imputation to their innocence.” Beverley goes on to admonish his

⁴⁷ Beverley *The History*, 92.

countrymen's attitudes toward these characteristics claiming, "However, this is ground enough for the English, who are not very nice in distinguishing betwixt guilt and harmless freedom, to think them incontinent." The image created here is misunderstood innocence which plays to the child-native perception that met many English readers' expectations. Beverley is careful to disclaim any message of sexual imagery, assigning that conception to inexperienced Englishmen. The image, culled from earlier narratives and engravings, reinforced the Edenic scenario, populated by childlike people that are "straight and well-proportioned, having the cleanest and most exact limbs in the world." Although Beverley does characterize Indians as possessing qualities of jealousy, cowardice, cunning, and treachery in Book I, he also recognized that "the English have taken away a great part of their country and consequently made everything less plenty among them." This statement does not draw from past works but describes conditions of Indians in Beverley's day. So in creating imagery that presents an antiquated version of Indians within a current Anglicized Virginia, again showing a passive natural element to an extension of the English nation.

The final book in *The History* continues in the vein of Books I and II, listing the numerous possibilities that the country affords with special emphasis on forming permanent settlements. Beverley distinctly calls for new planter communities and the founding of towns, stating that the cultivation and improvement of the land is impossible without the communal efforts of settlers working in cooperation with each other. He asserts, "these things can never be expected from a single family: but if they had cohabitations, it might be thought worth attempting. Neither as they are now settled, can

they find any certain market for their other grain, which if they had towns, would be quite otherwise.” Crop cultivation suffers, in Beverley’s account, from lack of community, Rice, a commodity that farmers “found to grow as well, as in Carolina, or any other part of the Earth,” labored “under the same inconvenience, the want of community, to husk and clean it; and, after all, to take it off the planter’s hands.” This critique of the inefficiency of farming practices due to the lack of towns speaks directly to how labor practices had evolved in the colony by the early eighteenth century. As Virginia grew into a plantation economy, the opportunity to establish towns diminished, especially with the proliferation of the use of slaves.

In Beverley’s time, communities apart from self-sustaining plantations existed in limited settlements mainly within the Chesapeake regions. Current and future attempts to form settlements that could grow into appreciable towns usually failed to produce results. Beverley claims this is the fault of his indolent countrymen, stating

they depend altogether upon the liberality of nature, without endeavoring to improve its gifts, by art or industry. They sponge upon the blessings of a warm sun, and a fruitful soil, and almost grutch the pains of gathering in the bounties of the earth. I should be ashamed to publish this slothful indolence of my countrymen, but that I hope that it will rouse them out of their lethargy, and excite them to make the most of all those happy advantages which nature has given them.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Beverley, *The History*, 250-251. See also Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1988). For a later assessment of the lack of towns in Virginia see Charles Farmer, *Settlement and Country Trade in Southside Virginia, 1730-1800* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1993).

Beverley critiques his fellow Virginians with the objective of inspiring them to action but there is also the implied message to his European readers that there is little competition over resources and opportunity in the colony. The inhabitants only participate in the minimum labor required of them. In yet another iteration of the bounty of Virginia, this time naval stores, Beverley chastises colonists: “These and a thousand other advantages that country naturally affords,” he claims “which its inhabitants make no manner of use of. They can see their naval stores daily benefit other people, who send tither to build ships; while they, instead of promoting such undertakings among themselves and easing such as are willing to go upon them, allow them no manner of encouragement.” All the opportunities are there if only the inhabitants would take advantage of them. A new influx of enterprising and energetic settlers could prompt local industries and communities of exchange, and rouse Virginians out of their lethargy.

Beverley employed specific tools of the English language to produce a promotional piece that is indicative of the growth of information exchange in the Atlantic World. More than a letter or business correspondence would, his work represents a conscious attempt to shape the perception of a colonial space using signs and designations that invite potential immigrants to a place that may be unfamiliar, but not *too* unfamiliar. Transatlantic correspondence not meant for a general readership could supply historians with a more reality-based assessment of conditions in Virginia. Books such as Beverley’s are glimpses into an unreal world, one that obscures facts such as heavy the depredations for settlers, subjugation of Indians, a strengthening reliance on a constricting plantation economy and, most importantly, the reinforcement of a slave

society. These inconvenient revelations would only serve to undermine Beverley's objectives to profit from the publication of his book, and regain his status in Virginia as a champion of the colony's prosperity. Economic opportunism extended from the author's pen to the reader's imagination, creating superficial communities based on Anglican ideals of expanded empire.

Beverley's fortunes in Virginia politics faded as his reputation as an author on both sides of the Atlantic flourished. Since its first printing in London in 1705 to 1722 the *History* saw four official printings and one pirated edition. The 1707, 1712, and 1718 editions, issued by Amsterdam booksellers, were French translations and demonstrate the demand for the work on the continent in a region distinct for its promotion of passages to the New World. A posthumous edition appeared in 1722, a year after the author's death. Beverley returned to Virginia and after an unsuccessful run for the Jamestown seat of the House of Burgesses in 1715. He retired to his 6,000-acre estate Beverley Park, turning down a clerkship appointment for King and Queen County. On his estate on the Virginia frontier he continued to write abridgments to his *History*, relating details of natural history that had not appeared in the early edition.⁴⁹

He also turned his attention to land-cultivation, particularly viticulture. His success in this pursuit led to a mention in a report to the Lords of Trade and Plantations in 1715 describing how most Virginians had partaken in vintner's product. John Fontaine, a Huguenot traveler recorded his skeptical description of Beverley's vineyard saying:

⁴⁹ "Robert Beverley, the Historian of Virginia," *VMHB*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (Oct., 1928) p. 338. See also Parrish, "Introduction," *The History*, xxxvi-xxxvii.

After breakfast we went to see Mr. Beverley's vineyard. We see the several sorts of vines which are natural and grow here in the woods. This vineyard is situated upon the side of the hill and consists of about three acres of land. He assures us that he made about four hundred gallons of wine. He hath also caves and a wine press, but according to the method they use in Spain he hath not the right method for it, nor his vineyard is not rightly managed. He hath several plants of French vines amongst them.⁵⁰

Fontaine goes on to explain how Beverley had made a bet with a "gentleman of the country" for a thousand guineas to prove that he could produce 700 gallons in seven years' time. Beverley claimed that he was on track to win the money, stating that next year's yield would be at least 700 gallons. The instance is demonstrative of the confidence Beverley had in his ability as a frontier cultivator and his willingness to risk capital on the belief that his industry would yield profit.

⁵⁰ John Fontaine, Edward Porter Alexander, ed., *The Journal of John Fontaine: and Irish Huguenot Son in Spain and in Virginia, 1710-1719* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1972) 86.

CHAPTER V

ALEXANDER SPOTSWOOD, WESTWARD EXPANSION, AND THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PLACE

O'er Hills and Dales the Noble Task persu'd; Up steepest Mountains in his
Course did run, Whose Tops were 'bove the Clouds, and Rivals to the
Moon Contemn'd the Length and Danger of the Way. So he might farther
stretch his Royal Master's Sway.¹

William Blakemore

John Fontaine, the traveler who chronicled Robert Beverley's wine venture, was an Irish Huguenot who left for America from Cork in December of 1714 on a Virginia made ship that ferried textiles, iron goods, and manufactures to the Potomac and returned with tobacco. He arrived in Virginia in May 26, 1715, remaining in the colony for four years. He made three trips from the Chesapeake to the colony's frontier, travelling by horse and canoe, stopping at Beverley's where the author of *The History* offered to lease him a tract of land for 999 years. Fontaine declined. Travelling on, Fontaine stopped at a frontier residence owned by another notable colonist, Lieutenant Governor Alexander Spotswood at a settlement west of Fredericksburg called Germanna.

¹ William Blakemore, *Expediitio Ultramontana*, George Seagood, trans., in *American Poetry: The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, David Shields ed., (New York: The Library of America, 2007) 347.

The settlers, skilled ironworking immigrants from Westphalia, were primarily occupied with patrolling the border, but Spotswood intended to employ them in a future mining and smelting operation. Fontaine would visit Spotswood, again in 1716 at Fort Christianna on the border of North Carolina. Later in the year Fontaine accompanied Spotswood on an expedition to the Shenandoah Valley to survey and claim the land for speculation. The trip's purpose also included a plan to establish a fort to secure trade with Indians. The goals of the trip met with a limited degree of success. According to Fontaine's account the members of the expedition participated in a hunting and camping excursion with plenty of strong drink along the way. The trip's leader, Spotswood, would later name the participants The Knights of the Golden Horseshoe.¹ The expedition mirrors Spotswood's economical aims in the colony, combining social and commercial activity with a push for frontier expansion with the purpose of profitable annexation of lands west of the Chesapeake. He did this by employing notable planters and businessmen of the colony but, like the expedition, the goals of Spotswood's designs on the colony would on be realized in a limited capacity. The expedition is indicative of Spotswood's entrepreneurial aims, ones that often coincided, but also conflicted with the objectives of men such as Byrd. Spotswood too, was interested in developing the backcountry Indian trade and diversifying business ventures in the colony, but his motivations differed somewhat from Byrd because he supported these projects as a direct representative of the crown's imperial intentions.

¹ John Fontaine, Edward Porter Alexander, ed., *The Journal of John Fontaine: An Irish Huguenot Son in Spain and Virginia 1710-1719* (Charlottesville: The University of Virginia Press, 1972) 10-15.



Figure 4. *Alexander Spotswood* by Charles Bridges, 1736. Accessed from the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Online Collection, <http://mesda.org>, loan courtesy of The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

Spotswood in Virginia

Alexander Spotswood arrived in Virginia in June of 1710. The arrival of one of the Queen's agents foreshadowed a continual period of transition for Virginia, one in which Spotswood played a primary role. Edmund Morgan describes Spotswood's aims as having the possibility of benefitting the common colonists, prying the economic power of the colony away from the tidewater elites and generating diversity in regions west of the fall line.² Spotswood's previous personal experience as a boy in North Africa and as a soldier on the battlefields of Europe primed him for an energetic governorship. However, the position carried severe challenges including opposition from an entrenched assembly of elite Burgesses and Council members whose objectives continually opposed the aims of the crown's agent. During his twelve-year tenure Spotswood proposed efforts to: protect of the frontier borders from Indian and French threats, found an Indian trading company, reform the tobacco trade, create a naval stores industry, increase exploration and settlement in the colony's backcountry, found an iron manufacture industry, and curb pirate activity along the colony's coastline. The projects met with varying success and none of them, with the exception perhaps of the successful raid that killed the pirate Edward Teach (Blackbeard), were not realized to the full potential Spotswood intended. If the success of these ventures were limited, they did foretell the coming of new era of westward expansion and economy, Richard L. Morton observes that while most of

² Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1975) 359. See also Anthony Parent Jr., *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003) 50-52.

Spotswood's projects succumbed to the lockstep opposition of the tidewater planters, he experienced considerable success in the areas of improved public revenues, strengthened border defenses, and the promotion of westward expansion. All of these elements carried strong implications for the succeeding generation and the transformation of Virginia into the eighteenth century.³

Spotswood's efforts also reveal strong characteristics of entrepreneurship. He represents a departure from the previous individuals discussed in this project by occupying an office of the crown and therefore attaching entrepreneurial projects directly to the economic interests of the British Empire. Lionel Wafer, who worked outside of royal authority in the illegitimate practice of entrepreneurial piracy offers a contrast to the legitimized (at least by the crown) economic projects of Spotswood. Equally in contrast is William Byrd who employed entrepreneurial activity to augment economic power as an elite planter. Byrd also used his influence to protect and grow his personal interests from a localized position of political power. Spotswood, like Wafer and Byrd, used planning, innovation, and risk in order to realize potential profit, the difference being that he did so in the name of the crown. The governor therefore offers a different model of transformative entrepreneurial activity, one which he exercised under a fully endorsed canopy of royal authority. As previously stated, this did not mean Spotswood experienced complete freedom to put his projects and reforms into place. On the contrary, his position contained legislative restrictions on his actions that neither Wafer or Byrd experienced.

³ Richard L. Morton, *Colonial Virginia, Vol. II, Westward Expansion and Prelude to Revolution, 1710-1763* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1960) 409, 485.

But the elevation of his office, much like Byrd, allowed him access to networks of entrepreneurial activity across the Atlantic and prompted him to promote his projects of economic and territorial expansion despite the pushback from the colonial assembly. Thus, Spotswood's commercial projects offer a model for official economic innovation in a colonial setting even if those projects failed to meet their planned objectives during his governorship.⁴

Spotswood's life before arriving in Virginia influenced his energetic vision for the colony during his governorship. He was the son of an army surgeon, born in the colony of Tangier in 1676, the year of Bacon's Rebellion. Charles II came into possession of that colony in 1662 as part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza, and the strategic position allowed a foothold for England in North Africa and the Mediterranean until the 1683 when the garrison was abandoned.⁵ The terrain around the garrison at Tangier may not have resembled his future home of Virginia, but there were some similarities in the location that may have informed the young Spotswood regarding the defense, potential, and limitations of an English settlement at the edge of a large continent. The English viewed the possession as a stopping point on the way to the lucrative trade of the Levant, but also realized that the Barbary coast, constantly a region of hostility, brought the threat of aggressive action by the surrounding Moors. At the garrison Spotswood would have witnessed the intensive training of a reserve force of the English regular army who were

⁴ A study that uses the entrepreneurship model to evaluate another regions and the foundations of towns is John Frederick Martin, *Profits in the Wilderness: Entrepreneurship and the Founding of New England Towns in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

⁵ Leonidas Dodson, *Alexander Spotswood: Governor of Colonial Virginia, 1710-1722*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1932) 3-5.

ready to defend against the Moors or return when needed to Europe for service.⁶ The young surgeon's son would have experienced a considerable energy extended toward potential mobilization, and the threat of outside hostility from native inhabitants may have informed his actions regarding Indian aggression in the early part of his governorship. He, unlike Byrd, was not initially raised in landed privilege or patronage, although he descended from a line of notable Scotsmen. His great grandfather was archbishop of St. Andrews and his grandfather, a supporter of Charles I, was secretary of Scotland, executed for his support of the King and opposition to the Presbyterian party. It may be more than just conjecture to suppose that loyalty to the reigning monarch ran in the Spotswood family.

Spotswood's early career reflected his garrisoned boyhood. He must have shown some initial promise as a candidate for a military career. At the age of seven he began study at the Westminster School in London, where he learned Latin and Greek and experienced the evolving cosmopolitanism of the empire's financial and cultural center. After graduation in 1693 he joined the 10th foot regiment of the English army where he rose quickly in rank, becoming lieutenant within his first year. Finding favor with John Churchill, then Earl of Marlborough, he saw action as a captain in Flanders at the outset of the War of Spanish Succession, and by the end of 1703 had secured the position of deputy chief of staff, a position usually awarded to much more senior officers. After four years of service Spotswood received the rank of lieutenant colonel from which he

⁶ John Childs, *The Army of Charles II* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul) 17-18.

directed the supply and logistics for an army of 50,000 men, as well as preparing the orders and proposals for legislative budgets regarding military appropriations. His experiences coincided with a military revolution in England, orchestrated by the Duke of Marlborough, and projecting a martial imperial objective to the administration of the realm's dominions. By the end of his service he could use his quick rise in the army and his distinguished service to petition for a new position as the governor of a colony.⁷

Stephen Saunders Webb asserts that Spotswood's designs for Virginia were acquired within the context of the imperial corporation, one that included royal, commercial, and military interests all under authority passed down by acts of parliament. He witnessed and directed the use of material and men expressly for the advancement of imperial aims. Similar to how Marlborough's army pushed through Europe during the War of Spanish Succession, the push for imperial influence also fanned out over England's colonies abroad as other veterans of Marlborough's martial revolution filled positions as governors. Some were more successful than others. George Hamilton acted as the governor-general of Virginia and although he never visited the North American colonies he shared in profits generated by the colony. Daniel Parke, after failing in a bid to win the Virginia governorship, attempted to govern the Leeward Islands from its center

⁷ Stephen Saunders Webb, *Marlborough's America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) biographical insert between 392-393, 333. For the biography and influence of the Duke of Marlborough see C.T. Atkinson, *Marlborough and the Rise of the British Army* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1921), Frank Taylor, *The Wars of Marlborough, 1702-1709* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921), Winston S. Churchill, *Marlborough: His Life and Times*, vol. 1-4 (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1934, 1968), J.R. Jones, *Marlborough* (British Lives) (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), John B. Hattendorf, *England in the War of the Spanish Succession: A Study of the English View and Conduct of Grand Strategy, 1702-1712* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1987), Stephen Saunders Webb, *Lord Churchill's Coup: The Anglo-American Empire and the Glorious Revolution Reconsidered* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1996).

Antigua but, like Spotswood, fell afoul of the assembly there for his heavy-handedness in enforcing the Acts of Trade. By comparison the Virginia planters seemed tame. Parke faced fierce opposition from radical clerics, smugglers, and an unruly militia who stormed his residence and left him to die in the city center from a broken back. Robert Hunter, received the governorship of New York. He had fought in Flanders for Marlborough as a captain in Royal Scots Dragoons, a troop responsible for requisitioning supplies from occupied territories and acting as military police. Eventually Marlborough named Hunter as one of his aides and in 1707 he received responsibilities which included the governing of New Jersey and Connecticut as well as New York. Hunter spent a decade in his governor's position, reforming New York's currency, settling Palatine immigrants, and stabilizing the political and social tensions in the colony. Like Spotswood he brought his army experience to bear, governing the colony with a military manner that attempted to push the agenda of the imperial project.⁸

Evidence revealing the loyalist allegiance Spotswood and his contemporaries showed toward the crown exist in the thousands of official correspondences between the colonies' capitals and Whitehall. Robert Hunter's instructions from the Queen regarding

⁸ Webb, *Marlborough's America*, biographical insert between p. 392-393. See also Webb, " 'Brave Men and servants to His Royal Highness,' The Household of James Stuart in the Evolution of English Imperialism," *Perspectives in American History*, VIII (1974) 55-80, Helen Hill Miller *Colonel Parke of Virginia: The Greatest Hector in the Town*, (Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill, 1989), Edward W. Greenfield, "Some New Aspects of the Life of Daniel Parke," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, Vol. 54, No. 4 (Oct., 1946). P. 306-315, Mary Lou Lustig, *Robert Hunter: New York's Augustan Statesman* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 1983). Patricia U. Bonomi, "New York: The Royal Colony," *New York History*, Vol 82, No. 1 (Winter 2001). P. 4-24. Richard R. Johnson, "The Imperial Webb: The Thesis of Garrison Government in Early America Considered," *The William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 43, No. 3 (July., 1986), 408-430.

the tempestuous political climate in New York and New Jersey made the new governor's tasks clear. The instructions from December of 1709 reads:

Addresses have increased the heats and animosities between the said Council and the Assembly to the great obstruction of our service in that province, and to the disquiet of our subjects there, it is our will and pleasure upon your arrival you examine into the reasons and causes of said differences, and endeavor all you can amicably to reconcile the disagreeing parties and to compose all such differences betwixt them and in case you shall meet with any opposition therin, that you represent unto us by one of our principle Secretarys and to our Commissioners of Trade and Plantations, your opinion upon the whole for our further pleasure therin.⁹

The endorsement of the Queen to work in concert with the new governor in diplomatically quelling any political unrest is forthright. Hunter, like Spotswood, sought to forward the interests of the imperial corporation by securing their respective colonies under the design of England's expanding Atlantic influence. Also similar to Spotswood's experience, Hunter needed to find a common ground between the governor's mansion and the Assembly in order create an environment conducive to active and energetic commercial endeavors for the benefit of the crown. The goal here, as with Spotswood, was to find common ground between the objectives of colonial assemblies and the economic development of the British Atlantic economy.

Governors like Hunter and Spotswood wrote gracious letters back to London highlighting the problems of the colonies, difficulties with assemblies and councils, and pledges of loyalty towards the interests of the crown and her subjects. Often these letters

⁹ "Draft of H.M. Instructions for Robert Hunter, Governor of Virginia, December 27, 1709," CO 5/995, p. 34-132.

contained support for the aims of the crown while openly criticizing the queen's subjects in the colonies. Daniel Parke, writing from the Leeward Islands in 1707, complained of the attitude of entitlement inhabitants showed toward Queen Anne. He wrote, "The people of Nevis expects the Queen should do everything for them, though they do not endeavor to help themselves. The store ship brought 20 guns, 500 small arms and 100 barrels of powder. I shall distribute as I think most for the Queen's service, though I do not expect to please any of the Islands, had the other stores come there would have been enough for all the Islands."¹⁰ Parke gauged the colonists' reactions to the shipping of arms into the colony and his constant attempts to garrison soldiers around the Leeward Islands who, from Parkes point-of-view would be acting as protection for the settlers, but from the colonists' point-of-view were there to enforce trade restrictions. Hunter, and for a time Spotswood, experienced some success in ingratiating themselves into the local legislatures, but Parke's heavy handed style regarding his vision for royal authority in a volatile settlement (as well as many private indiscretions) cost him his life.

Spotswood's correspondence to the Lords of Trade, Queen Anne, and later in his governorship, George I, demonstrated his mastery of the rhetoric needed to assure London of the governor's loyalty. On October 25th, 1714 Spotswood wrote to Lord Bolingbroke of his sadness at hearing of the death of Queen Anne, "On the 18th current I received your Lordships packet with the mournful news of our late most gracious Sovereign and ye proclamations sent for my guidance in this conjunction." He goes on to

¹⁰ "Governor Parke to the Council of Trade and Plantations, June 10m 1707," CO 152/7, No. 25 and CO 153/10, p. 60-63.

pledge his support for the new sovereign, King George, by stating “I proclaimed with all the solemnity this country is capable of, his majesty King George, and concluded the night with an entertainment at my house for all ye gentlemen in town and with firing of guns and all other suitable demonstrations of joy, which loyal subjects could testify for the happy accession of their rightful sovereign.” A series of letters continued through November claiming loyalty to the new king, and assuring that his subjects in Virginia unanimously acknowledge “the undoubted and rightful title” to the colony the King now enjoyed.¹¹ Not fully reflecting the tensions beginning to surface between Spotswood and the planter elite over a number of the governor’s entrepreneurial projects and regulations, the letters from the end of 1714 demonstrated the faithfulness of Spotswood’s royal imperative. The monarch’s sovereignty extended to direct proprietary ownership of the lands of Virginia, and Spotswood assured representatives of the King that the governor’s office represented the caretaker of that proprietorship. Spotswood constantly presented himself as the Queen’s and King’s man in the context of the promotion of Virginia’s business environment.

Alexander Spotswood fulfilled the administrative duties of colonial governor under varying levels of influence by the House of Burgesses and the politically powerful tidewater elites in Virginia.. Early in his governorship he spent considerable amounts of energy courting the wealthy planters in an effort to gain support of his policies for western expansion of the colony, but the divergence between the aims of the Crown and

¹¹Alexander Spotswood, *The Official Letters of Alexander Spotswood, Lieutenant-Governor of the Colony of Virginia, 1710-1722*: (Richmond: Library of Virginia, 1885) Vol. 2, 75-76.

the aims of the planters ended with increased resentment between the two parties, resulting in Spotswood's removal in 1722. The planters were resistant to Spotswood's plans for diversification of the colonial economy, and as a representative of an increasingly authoritative constitutional monarchy Spotswood projected a threatening royal authority which, in the planter's minds, sought to stem the wealth and power of Virginia's first families. April Lee Hatfield, studying the relationship between Virginia and the larger Atlantic world, highlights the relationship between colonists and colonial officials in the first half of the seventeenth century, observing that before the end of the century the two groups often worked in concert to contradict regulatory trade practices administered by the crown. But by the beginning of the eighteenth century London had countered any independent colonial cohesion by hand-picking energetic officials whose aim was to enforce commercial and political regulations. The goal was to create conformity within all the colonies by establishing a small network of officials who could oversee a united colonial project, creating centralized control from the metropolis London while protecting trade through a strong loyalist authority. Royal administrators employed this colonial authority by awarding prestigious titles such as customs collector, surveyor general, secretary to the Lords of Trades and Plantations, and general of royal revenues of the colonies, the majority of which were administered from London. While Hatfield argues that this move toward royal control created the "driving force instrumental in creating intercolonial networks," in regard to the entrepreneurial aims of men like

Spotswood the stringent regulations required careful negotiating and petitioning between the crown, their royal officials, and colonial governing bodies.¹²

The rise in influence of royal authority over the colonies at the end of the seventeenth century had specific importance for the colony of Virginia. Between 1680 and 1750 colonial authority in Virginia resided within a small group of political, social and economic elites made up of members of wealthy families which held the majority of seats on the colony's governing assembly. One of these governing bodies included the powerful Council of State, the advisory board to the governor and the court of last resort in Virginia. Composed of a handful of gentry and merchants, political elites shared the middle position of royal arbitrators in a colony which increasingly bridled at London's regulatory practices. While administering to the operation of the colonies, Virginia colonial officials frequently swayed toward the side of the colonists, emerging less as an instrument of royal authority and more as representatives of an increasing awareness of Virginian colonial identity. While the crown established a hedge of royal officials to administer regulatory conformity in the colonies, Virginia's elites also formed a political front which operated, as independently as the royal framework would allow, ostensibly in

¹² April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) 195. See also Jean B. Russo and J. Elliott Russo, *Planting an Empire: The Early Chesapeake in British North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), *The British Atlantic World, 1500-1800: Second Edition*, David Armitage and Michael J. Braddick eds. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). Jack P. Greene, *Creating the British Atlantic: Essays on Transplantation, Adaptation, and Continuity* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2013), *Negotiated Authorities: Essays in Colonial Political and Constitutional History* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994), *Peripheries and Center: Constitutional Development in the Extended Politics of the British Empire and the United States 1607-1788* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1990). James B. Bell, *Empire, Religion and Revolution in Early Virginia, 1607-1786* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

the interest of the colonists. These often opposing means of governmental control stood like political fault lines on either sides of the Atlantic, impeding access for commercial projects unless transversed by skilled negotiators whose strategy necessarily included strong lobbying to both bodies. Establishing entrepreneurial activity within eighteenth century royal colonial authority required not only planning and capital from networks throughout the Atlantic, it also demanded a navigation of the bureaucracy and politics which could impede progress and often misdirect intended results.

Spotswood used influence and patronage to secure a tight administration during his governorship, but the later years of his term reflect a constant wrangling with Virginia's governing bodies, especially the House of Burgesses, where Spotswood represented the crown's interest against an increasingly unconvinced group of elites. Spotswood could often be difficult to reason with concerning issues that required lessening the influence of the crown, which frequently brought him at odds with a number of Virginia's most powerful House members. The issue of how to use quitrent, or property taxes, became a bone of contention between Spotswood and the House, with advocates for the colony petitioning for the bolstering of the colonial economy through the use of land tax revenues while Spotswood insisted on sending them directly to England. It was over quitrents that Spotswood fell out of favor with one powerful council member he had spent considerable energy courting in the early years of his term, William Byrd II, who also contested Spotswood's plan for the creation of a western trading outfit, the Indian Company which would create competition for the Indian trade Byrd's father had cultivated. By 1715 Spotswood had lost nearly all the support in the House of

Burgesses he had built during his earlier term, and after contentious debates the governor dissolved the assembly only to be met by formal complaints lodged against him to the Board of Trade by several detractors. At the bottom of the complaints lay the accusation that Spotswood had used public funds to finance the Indian Company and the Germanna settlement and ironworks. Although no one was ever able to prove the allegations, the disbanding of the assembly prompted a campaign against the governor that continued on both sides of the Atlantic, sustained by a network of powerful landed gentry with considerably more clout than Spotswood. The general charge from Spotswood's detractors was that he had used the public trust for self-interest, while the governor accused the gentry of exactly the same offence.¹³

Spotswood's relationship with Virginia's powerful elite demonstrates his function within an Atlantic network as defender of the crown's objectives against a tide of independent colonial interests. The influence of the colony's governing assembly which, operating directly in concert with tobacco wealth in Virginia, created a stopgap for the governor's imposition of royal reforms and regulations. But apart from being His Majesty's administrator, Spotswood also acted as a royal entrepreneur, seeking ways to

¹³ Evans, Emory G. *A Topping People: the Rise and Decline of Virginia's Old Political Elite 1680-1790* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009) 50-53. For studies of the dynamics of the Virginia planter elites and the royal authority in eighteenth century Virginia see Issac, Rhys. *Landon Carter's Uneasy Kingdom: Revolution and Rebellion on a Virginia Plantation* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004). Roeber, A.G.. *Faithful Magistrates and Republican Lawyers: Creators of Virginia Legal Culture, 1680-1810* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1981) offers a study of the rise of legal precedents in the Colony which shapes society and created a division in legal standards between the colony and the crown. For studies regarding conflicts with the Crown leading up to the American Revolution see Breen, T.R. *Tobacco Culture: The Mentality of the Great Tidewater Planters on the Eve of Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001) and Rhys, Isaac. *The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999). Charges against Spotswood and his reply, Feb. 7th, 1716, Jan. 16, 1717, to Mr. Popple Jan. 16, 1717, Spotswood, *The Official Letters* Vol 2., 190-218.

diversify the colonial economy that had, by the 1710s, relied almost exclusively on the quickly declining tobacco yield. Ventures which included an Indian trading company and mining speculations represented an expansion of the Virginia colony westward while creating opportunity for settlers and investors. As Spotswood continued to battle Virginia's political elite he also promoted backcountry settlement which would take the colony further west, away from the traditional representations of colonial power of Westover and Williamsburg. Spotswood, who already wore many hats, consistently demonstrated entrepreneurship in an official capacity during his term, searching for means to expand Virginia's topography and economy in the increasingly diverse network of Atlantic commerce.¹⁴

Even so, tobacco represented the primary commodity that needed attention. In the fall of 1713 Spotswood explained in detail his actions regarding the declining Virginia tobacco market. He describes the condition of the Virginia tobacco market as dire enough to lure Virginians away from tobacco to find other means of income. This development would ostensibly undermine the economic potential of the crown by creating more private competition for markets such as the Indian trade and naval stores, and possibly limit the colonial market for English manufactured goods. The Lords of Trade expressed this fear of losing productive subjects stating that settlers in the tobacco colonies, "are

¹⁴ More studies on the dynamics of colonial politics in Virginia and North America include: *Kathleen M. Brown, Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), John Gilman Kolp, *Gentlemen and Freeholders: Electoral Politics in Colonial Virginia* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), Richard R. Beeman, *The Varieties of Political Experience in Eighteenth-Century America (Early American Studies)*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015);

now reduced to very great wants and necessities, for which reason several of the inhabitants are removed to other colonies where they are not so great advantage to this Kingdom; and others that remain, are forced to fall into manufactures with which they used formerly to be supplied from hence.”¹⁵ Chesapeake tobacco declined under competition from European markets and Spotswood’s proposals to revive the market rested on several points of the proposed act he wrote in 1713. He sought to emphasize the ill management of tobacco as a means to pay off debt. Many residents of the colonies used tobacco as a currency which, he argued, led to individuals using “house sweepings and the worst of trash” and pouring saltwater over the tobacco to increase the weight of exported hogsheads. This he claimed led to “an unhappy occasion to the breeding up of too many persons in a fraudulent way of dealing.”¹⁶ He required planters to have their product viewed by a sworn officer to uncover the export and use as legal tender of trash and damaged tobacco. He also called for the end of the practice of planting on unclaimed land which allowed fraudulent planters to grow their product without paying quitrents. The law required support to planters who made improvement to their lands, allowing swamps and marshes “which there are here great quantities,” to be drained for both planting and pasturage, generating a higher yield in quality tobacco and more quitrents to the crown from lands “which now yields no profit either to the Queen or Subjects.”

¹⁵ “Council of Lords of Plantations to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, June 5, 1714,” CO 5/1364, p 34-42.

¹⁶ Hening, *Statutes*, III, 1712-1726, p. 47.

Spotswood also reminded the Lords that nonpayment of rents resulted in forfeiture of land back to the crown.¹⁷

The Tobacco Act potentially provided advantages to the Virginia tobacco market as well as the general economy of the colony, but the House of Burgesses soon launched a strong opposition. Initially the law better ensured the payment of quitrents. It regulated and supported the payment of services and fees with higher quality tobacco. It reduced loading time by storing export tobacco in coastal warehouses cutting the loading time onto ships in half, and it allowed exporters more freedom to inspect the quality of the product prior to shipping. Spotswood also planned to award those burgesses who supported the act and the agencies in charge of inspecting the tobacco, with the intention of involving the colonies leading planters in the general improvement of their primary commodity. Spotswood's success in getting the bill passed in 1713 survived until the assembly of 1715 when twenty-five counties called for a repeal. The Burgesses passed a bill disallowing any members of the House to profit from the office of tobacco agent. This was rejected by the council, but the push to repeal the act remained strong in the planter camps, and eventually on the other side of the Atlantic with the tobacco merchants, apparently because poor grade tobacco still ended up in England. The act, coming under royal representatives' scrutiny, also appeared to some to be an overstep of royal authority on the part of the governor, deemed "an act of unusual nature," that restrained trade rather than promoted it. Under these pressures, with much lobbying from

¹⁷ Spotswood, *Official Letters*, 35, 46-48.

prominent members of the house, board of trade recommended disallowance of the act.

Full repeal came in November of 1717.¹⁸

Although the act met with repeal the issues that brought about its initial adoption remained, prompting action from succeeding governors and assemblies into the eighteenth century. Trying to balance the economic livelihood of the small and large planters against the European demand for quality product tested the political and commercial environment of the colony. Viewed as heavy handed by his opponents, Spotswood nevertheless initiated a new approach to tobacco reform that influenced Atlantic markets for decades afterwards. In attempting to shore up the primary commercial market of the colony Spotswood hoped to create a stable environment for future non-tobacco dependent ventures. These included mining operations which naturally fit the overall objective of westward expansion. To forward this aim the governor needed to employ knowledge of Atlantic networks that could allow him the labor he needed for the diversifying venture.

Immigration Networks of the Atlantic

Spotswood first wrote of his interest in iron mining in backcountry Virginia in 1710 when he informed the Council of Trade of newly discovered iron deposits southwest of the Potomac.¹⁹ The Council rejected his plans to develop these fields but Spotswood persisted with another letter which included an appeal to Queen Anne to back

¹⁸ Dodson, *Alexander Spotswood*,

¹⁹ Spotswood, Alexander, Letter to the Council of Trade, October 24, 1710. Blakenbaker, John "Notes on the Colony of 1714, part 2: the Hiatus," *Beyond Germanna*, v. 2, n. 1., (January 1990) 65.

the venture of which the owners of the lands were willing to “yield up their rights into her Maj’ties hands.”²⁰ This succession of letters revealed that when Spotswood’s first attempt to raise interest in the project failed he appealed directly to royal authority for support while underscoring the loyalty of the colonists whose land the deposits were on, demonstrating their commitment to the well-being and economic growth of the colony. Spotswood employed his position as royal governor to influence the political authority on both sides of the Atlantic while including the colonists’ royalist sentiment in an act of expansion. The governor also secured the influence of a royal agent in England, Colonel Blakiston, asking for his “prudent management” concerning the discovery of a new mine with the potential of yielding silver. We cannot know for certain whether Spotswood courted royal backing to undercut the assembly’s disinterest in mining, but we do know that a silver mining venture required a royal patent and that the Queen’s interest in a rich commodity such as silver could also open doors for an iron mining industry in backcountry Virginia.

Spotswood continued to discuss potential mining ventures in his letters to Blakiston with the idea of importing German iron workers. Spotswood stated that he no longer had faith in royal support of the mining venture, as he tended to “look on the worst side of business wherein one is far engaged, and must go through.” He delayed any actions on the matter until he gained the support of the Queen.²¹ In May of 1714 the Council of

²⁰ Spotswood, Letter to the Council, 12/15/1710. Blakenbaker, *Beyond Germanna*, vol. 2, n. 1 (January 1990) 65.

²¹ Spotswood, *Official Letters*, 66.

Trade recommended the mining venture stating “Col. Spotswood, H.M. Lt. Governor of Virginia, having signified to us, that he does believe, the designed undertaking, will turn to H.M. advantage, and the improvement of that Colony, the same carrying the prospect of public benefit, without charge or risqué to H.M.” A usual, there existed a royal incentive to support the venture, one fifth of the profits of the mining proceeds would be awarded to the Queen .²²

There is debate over how much interest Spotswood had in promoting iron mining in the Germanna area. Apart from mining, Germanna historian John Blakenbaker asserts that the founding of a settlement above the fall line of the Rappahannock River interested colonial officials and speculators for four interconnected reasons. The first was the threat of Indian encroachment, requiring the need for a buffer which would protect the inhabitants of more established populated areas. This buffer would also ensure safety for the second colonial aspiration, the settlement of family farms in the area, creating a westward border of settlement which would hedge against Indian and French interests to the west and north. Connected to this increasingly populated periphery was the third objective, possibility for investors to patent large tracks of land to settle with tenant farmers. The fourth goal required diversification projects including mining in the foothill of the Blue Ridge which would offer profits from mineral wealth to the colonial and royal budgets. The four aspirations represent, in approximate order of importance, the characteristics of backwoods settlement which combined the use of vast resources with

²² “Council of Trade to the Lord High Treasurer, May 12, 1714,” CO 5/1364, p. 31-33.

geo-political and economic claims and demanded people of sufficient energy to cultivate and settle the patented land.²³

Emigrants often did not follow a straight path to the backcountry of Virginia nor did they travel under the patronage of a single sponsor. Their journey is an example of one of many parts in a massive migration of European people funded, organized, promoted, and negotiated by countless entrepreneurs, middlemen, and speculators in the eighteenth century. The network included agents of all financial means and social station on both sides of the Atlantic, many of whom journeyed from Europe to America and back in search of investment opportunities and partners. Often the financial arrangements and partnerships of these speculators were tenuous, resulting in breaks in the agreements which might leave an investor scrambling to make up losses while the immigrants he was sponsoring waited for passage to America. Compounding the difficulty of cultivating these investments to a point where they would bear fruit was the complicated business of winning royal support for the ventures. On both sides of the Atlantic entrepreneurs built their cases for westward expansion, promising the crown returns on resources such as silver and naval stores to add to the wealth of the colonies. Meanwhile their agents recruited laborers and settlers from the European continent often without any specific plan for migration, trusting the convoluted network of sponsors reaching from Berne to Norfolk, London, to Philadelphia to guide their recruits to the backcountry of the colonies.

²³Spotswood, Alexander, Letter to Colonel Blakiston, March 15, 1714, Blakenbaker, *Beyond Germanna*, v. 2, n. 1 (January 1990) 66.

As larger economic interests competed in the transatlantic immigration process a more middleman entrepreneur known as the “newlander” emerged. Working in ports that offered passage to the New World such as Rotterdam and London, newlanders acted as agents who assisted in transporting poor immigrants to the Americas via the redemptioner system. The newlander would secure passage for immigrants on a vessel by contracting with a future employer in North America who would pay the cost of passage when the immigrants arrived. For a short time, it proved a viable arrangement until increased demand for labor resulted in deteriorating conditions aboard ships, delays in the redemption of contracts, and the separation of family members. The lure of America, along with the heavy promotion by European governments and merchants, created a swell of immigration that brought numerous agents in Atlantic commerce in contact with each other, creating a web of exchanges which helped finance the migration of thousands Europeans to America in the early eighteenth century. As long as Atlantic entrepreneurship thrived, so did the immigration process, and as British North America expanded into its frontier the thriving Atlantic network of newlanders, investors, royal agents, lawyers, government officials, seamen, and merchants all supported the tide which carried settlers to the western edge of the British empire.²⁴

²⁴ A.G., Roeber, *Palatines, Liberty, and Property: German Lutherans in Colonial British North America* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993) 98. On immigration trade networks see also Wockeek, Marianne. “Irish and German Migration to Eighteenth Century North America,” from *Coerced and Free Migrations: Global Perspectives* ed. David Eltis (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002) 152-175 and Aaron Spencer Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717-1775* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996). Marilyn C. Baseler also reveals how colonial officials and royal immigration agents lured potential immigrants to the colonies by playing to the varied definitions of liberty maintained by differing groups. Marilyn C. Baseler, *Asylum for Mankind: America 1607-1800* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998).

Franz Louis Michel, a Swiss investor who had for years petitioned the English crown to invest in a colony southwest of the Potomac, asserted that his intention of bringing German immigrants to the backcountry was so “that when they and their people should be compelled through war, religion or other accidents to leave their homes and country, they might find a certain and secure dwelling place.” Michel had observed the thriving community of Germantown, Pennsylvania, where he identified a “liberty which all strangers enjoy in commerce, belief and settlement.”²⁵ Michel’s descriptions defined three precepts of liberty, the right to trade, pray, and settle while simultaneously emphasizing the commercial and geo-political potential of a well-established trading community. Michel’s enthusiasm for the town underscored his desire to found more settlements in Virginia which might bring further elements of liberty to the outlands of the British colonies. In pointing out the characteristics of the established town Michel was selling the idea of future settlements to a diverse audience, one that might include a member of the Lords of Trade and Plantations on one hand and a Rhineland minister on the other, but with the single intention of attracting simultaneous investment and immigration to the backcountry.²⁶

Men like Michel stood to gain a great deal if an investment proved profitable. But investment in the backcountry also involved a significant amount of risk and required a

²⁵ Franz Louis Michel, Letter to Mr. John Rudolph Ochs, May 20th 1704, excerpts in William J. Hinke, ed. Trans., “Letter Regarding the Second Journey of Michel to America, February 14, 1703 to January 16, 1704, and his stay in America till 1708,” *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 24:1 (January 1916), p. 294, National Humanities Center 2009.

²⁶ Hendricks, *Backcountry Towns* 28-29; Denny, Elizabeth Chapman and Margaret Collins Denny Dixon, *Virginia’s First German Colony* (Richmond: 1961) 9-11, 13-14.

commitment which might not see returns for many years, if at all. Wealthy planters in eastern Virginia, who by the eighteenth century controlled the colony's political and economic systems, stood a much better chance of gaining profit from the long-established cultivation of tobacco, but even these planters suffered from soil depletion which had prompted colonial officials to look for ways of diversifying the economy. The prospect of sponsoring a far-flung outpost on a dangerous frontier on the chance of finding silver ore deposits profitable enough to recoup the investment was too risky a venture to conclude that these speculators were only in it for the money.²⁷

Motivations that involved ideological conviction, or at least empathy for settlers under their care, made themselves apparent in writings by agents such as Michel and his partner Baron Christoph von Graffenreid. In the fall of 1713 von Graffenreid, who had recently founded the colony of New Bern in the Carolinas, found himself in charge of the 40 or more German emigrants now interned in London and bound for Fort Germanna in Virginia. The fact that at this point von Graffenreid was unable to assist the Germans due to his own financial troubles demonstrates the precariousness of business ventures extended throughout the Atlantic. Miscommunication also marks the ambivalent nature of the venture; Michel and von Graffenreid's agent was only supposed to come to England with two or three experienced miners but had ended up bringing roughly forty. In his account von Graffenreid exuded his distress at having to abandon the emigrants to their own devices and explained the energy expended on their behalf to find a solution.

²⁷ Michel, "Letter to John Ochs."

His account reveals a considerable amount of sympathy, claiming that their situation “caused me not little pains, worry, vexation and expense, since the people had come here so blindly, thinking to find everything necessary for their support and their transportation to the American mines.”²⁸ Graffenreid’s writing does not suggest a cold or detached broker, but one whose interest lay in the welfare of the settlers as a personal or moral investment.²⁹

Von Graffenried and Michel were investors who employed agents, and often acted as agents themselves, to further their interests in the colonies. The amount of physical energy and monetary resources men like these expended on promoting the settlement of the backcountry of British North America was enormous, and a single-minded motivation of profit at the cost of immigrants’ future and well-being is not significantly evident when analyzing contemporaneous documents. European cosmopolitan entrepreneurship may have had qualities which promoted motivations of greed, the ventures Atlantic entrepreneurs undertook in the backlands of the British colonies carried too much risk to be purely motivated by profit. The evidence contains an apparent element of ideology in the transportation of immigrants. The relationship between the entrepreneurs, the settlers, and the colonial authority to which investors parlayed for endorsement of ventures suggests a triumvirate of connections that relied on several motivations from each section. The crown used the independent investors as

²⁸ Graffenried, Chrisoph von. *Chrisoph von Graffenried’s Account of the Founding of New Bern* (New York: Heritage Books, 1999) 257-258;

²⁹ Graffenried, *Account*, 386.

brokers to populate their colonies just as the brokers used the crown to secure their investments. Meanwhile settlers from Europe were migrating to the backcountry to experience Michel's assertions of liberty, especially religious freedom, on the frontier. The Germans bound for Fort Germanna managed to navigate this web of interconnected interests even as they harbored their own motivations regarding their future community. On their arrival in the backcountry, the immigrants' indentured service status still tied them to the Atlantic network of labor exchange but now, in addition to adapting to the physical conditions of the settlement, the Germans had to adapt to the environment of colonial political authority.³⁰

Germanna and the Settlement of the Virginia Backcountry

One of Spotswood's first task in Virginia rested on securing the colony's borders. From 1710-1714 he spent considerable attention to aiding the North Carolina colony in a conflict with the Tuscarora Indians who had attacked settlements along the range of the frontier. He first sent militias out to convince tributary Indians not to join the Tuscarora and then advanced negotiations with a branch uninvolved in the attacks. Spotswood managed to broker an agreement which would free hostages taken by the Indians, but when he planned to fund a larger military force to assist the North Carolinians he found that the colony to the south could not provision them and he rescinded the offer. In the meantime, the governor planned to increase the number of rangers for the general defense of the colony. By the end of 1712 Spotswood secured a modest appropriation from the

³⁰ Hackett, *Backcountry Towns*, 34-37; Wust, Klaus. *The Virginia Germans* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1969), 23-24.

burgesses of £1000, but North Carolina survived its crisis early on due mainly to the help from the South Carolina colony. Spotswood continued to urge negotiations with the Tuscarora into 1714, finally reaching an agreement with three involved parties of Indians, the Nottoway, Saponi, and the Tuscarora. The treaty allotted six square miles each in the Virginia colony where the Indians could build a fort and settlement. The treaty also stipulated that the allotment be moved in the event of English settlements' encroachment. It also allowed for 2000 acres for the purpose of religious and educational instruction and hunting rights on any unpatented land in the colony. The Tuscarora Indians' tract lay between the Rappahannock and the James Rivers, an act intended to remove the Indians from their traditional homelands in North Carolina to break any ties there that would prompt them to return to hostilities.³¹

In the summer of 1714 Spotswood could report to the Lords of Trade, "It is with great satisfaction that I can acquaint your Lords that this country enjoys a perfect peace, and that even the Indians, since the last treaty made with them, have not offered the least disturbance."³² Securing the borders of joining colonies and the western frontier proved crucial to a stability that could allow for attention to financial matters. Indian hostility and threats from the French to the north interrupted trade and created insecurity amongst landowners and settlers, some of whom could still remember the crises of 1676 during Bacon's Rebellion. By lobbying for increased ranger and militia presence Spotswood,

³¹ Dodson, *Alexander Spotswood*, 25-33, 77, Spotswood, *Official Letters*, 1, 116, 119, 132, 133, Morton, *Colonial Virginia*, 431-433.

³² Spotswood, *Letters*, 70.

based on his experience in the English army in Europe, worked to underwrite a viable environment for the general economic growth of the colony. In this way, Spotswood employed the entrepreneurial activity of assessing and reducing risk for the good of commercial conditions.

Spotswood first wrote of German immigrants from the Siegen Valley coming to the settlement named Germanna in 1714 in a letter to Colonel Blakistore, acknowledging the colonel's part in the mining venture and continuing his petition for support from the Queen.³³ Blakistore represents the single individual who connected the web of colonial and royal authority, European entrepreneurs, German settlers, and Governor Spotswood to the backwoods venture, acting as a broker whom Spotswood introduced to von Graffenried and who took over the arrangements of the German's immigration after von Graffenried fell short of funds. The complicated circuit in which the Germans found themselves required the adaptation of entrepreneurs and officials to variable financial and social conditions which transformed the intended outcome for every participant. Von Graffenried's original plan of supporting the German iron workers collapsed under the weight of financial burden, so an agent under royalist influence stepped in to use his connections, in this case Spotswood, to ensure a place for the immigrants. The series of exchanges reveals entrepreneurs and colonial authority operating in an ever-shifting network of erratic transatlantic conditions in which risk and return were often two very opposite notions. Nevertheless, the German's landing was not completely random; the

³³ Spotswood, Alexander, Letter to Colonel Blakiston, March 15, 1714 check this, Blakenbaker, *Beyond Germanna*, v. 2, n. 1 (January 1990) 66.

1714 immigrants were mainly mine workers and their destination was a settlement founded primarily on the discovery of iron deposits. The laborers were qualified for the intentions of the settlement, but were Spotswood and his investors prepared to receive them with a sustainable occupation in mining?



Figure 5. *Virginia Marylandia et Carolina*, John Baptist Homann (Nuremberg, 1709-1719). The red circle denotes the settlement of Germanna (inserted by author). accessed from the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Online Collection, <http://mesda.org>, Gift of Michael and Carolyn McNamara.

Judging from the record the answer is no, at least not until 1716. Spotswood's intentions for the Germans varied depending on who he corresponded with. For Blakiston and Graffenreid the inference was that the Germans would help operate a mining venture west of Fredericksburg. But to the fickle Council on Trade, who had yet to warm to Spotswood's mining aspirations, Spotswood proposed "to settle them above the falls of the Rappahannock River to serve as a barrier to the inhabitants of that part of the country against the incursions of Indians."³⁴ The employment of the Germans in the first two years of the settlement seems consistent with the council's report. Due to the lateness in the planting season, when the German's arrived at Germanna they were employed clearing roads, building a fort, carrying cannon and provisions and acting as rangers which granted them exclusive hunting rights on the land adjoining the settlement. The multi-task function of the settlers reinforces the notion of complex roles of individuals populating the backcountry. The aspirations of colonial officials to create settlements required the Germans to occupy themselves as laborers, builders, surveyors, militia, trappers, and hunters while Spotswood continued to lobby for support of his mining venture. Complicating the loosely imposed roles the colonial authority placed upon the colonist were the actual aspirations of the settlers themselves, whose concepts of authority, property and identity were often at odds with the legal precedent and service agreements of Virginia's colonial authority.³⁵

³⁴ Spotswood, Alexander, Report to the Council on Trade, April 28, 1714; Blakenbaker, "Motivations for the Building of Fort Germanna," *Beyond Germanna*, v. 4, n. 2. (March 1992) 196.

³⁵ Fogleman, *Hopeful Journeys*, 5.

A maintenance of religious accordance by prominent community members took place as the immigrants adapted to the environment of the Virginia backcountry. Contemporaneous accounts of the Virginia frontier provide a picture of a borderland populated by a few far-flung forts acting as defenses structures and trading outposts for the Indian populations west of the foothills. A German traveling in Pennsylvania, Gottlieb Mittelberger, an open critic of the land tenant system, journeyed to the North American frontier in the 1750s. Claiming that “the sad and miserable condition of those traveling from Germany to the New World compelled me to write this account,” Mittelberger describes the strenuous work demanded by the frontier in order to make room for fields. Settlers cleared large areas of all trees including roots, the timber used to construct fence rails in order to contain farm animals. Mittelberger asserted that the work in America was harder than in Germany and wonders why anyone would want to undertake the potentially fatal journey only to endure this type of backbreaking labor.³⁶ The account, however subjective, serves to underscore the difficult life of the frontier, and as Mittelberger explains injustices of the indentured servant system where “a wife must be responsible for a sick husband and a husband for a sick wife and they must serve a double term, when both parents die at sea, having come more than halfway, then the children are responsible for their parents,” and that “the individuals in families may be sold to different purchasers and become separated,” a picture of the difficulties of the environmental and labor systems in the colonies emerges. The German immigrants settled amidst these environmental and social structures in similar circumstances and

³⁶ Mittelberger, Gottlieb, “Journal to Pennsylvania” in *Beyond Germanna*, v. 9, n. 6, (1997) 534.

continued to work toward social and economic autonomy conducive to entrepreneurialism.³⁷

Firsthand accounts also exist of the fort at Christanna in today's Brunswick County, Virginia. The fort was manned by troops commanded by an officer also housing "twelve men at the charge of the Indian Company which are incorporated by act of assembly for that purpose." Descriptions relay that the compound "consists of five large pentagonal log houses which serve for bastions, and a curtain of mauled wood with earth on the inside from one house to another after the form Enclosed." Each of these blockhouses house contained 1,400 pound cannon. Fort Christanna also employed a schoolteacher to teach Indian children from the surrounding territory in an effort to assimilate native inhabitants. The heavily armed and manned trading outpost is indicative of the importance of promoting and protecting trade on the frontier. The Indian company, backed by the assembly, required a sturdy frontier presence to expand the borderland and simultaneously attract and deter Indians.³⁸ The fort at Christanna connected to a "passage

³⁷ There are a number of studies of the complex social conditions in Germany after the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 which ended the Thirty Years War. Large histories which provide an overview of this period include Wilson, Peter. *From Reich to Revolution: German History, 1558-1806* (New York: Palgrave, 2004) and Ozment, Steven. *A Mighty Fortress: A New History of the German People* (New York: Harper Collins, 2004). Wilson's *The Thirty Years War: Europe's Tragedy* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2009) evaluates the aftermath of the Thirty Years War and the social structures including the rise of the powerful states and electorates as does Hagen, William W.. "Seventeenth Century Crises in Brandenburg: The Thirty Years War, the Destabilization of Serfdom and the Rise of Absolutism," *The American Historical Review*, vol. 94, No. 2 (April, 1989) 302-335. For studies on the religious transformations in Germany to the New World Mead, Sydney. "From Coercion to Persuasion: Another Look at the Rise of Religious Liberty and the Emergence of Denominationalism," *Church History*, vol. 25, no. 4 (Dec. 1956) 317-337 and a large overview Ahlstrom, Sydney E.. *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972) offer studies of the continuation of religious practices in by Europeans in America.

³⁸ Beresford, Richard, "Abstract of a Letter from North Carolina," *Beyond Germanna*, v. 14, no. 6 (2003) 912. See also Fontaine's Journal 90-100.

through ye mountains between the Rappahanock and Potomake rivers,” that led to the region where Germanna lay, “for near thereabouts a parcel of Palatines are settled in a town called Germanna, some of which are miners and have given hopes of some mines that way.” Christanna and Germanna represented outposts of empire that combined commercial potential in the form of Indian trade and mining operations with expanded border protection and western expansion.³⁹

As for as living and working conditions, the colony at Germanna seems to have experienced an existence somewhere between the deprivation that Mittelberg describes and the more heavily reinforced and supplied fort at Christanna. Although the Germans also built a fort at Germanna, they lived there with little resources for at least two years. The Huguenot traveler, John Fontaine, gives the only detailed description of Fort Germanna at the time settlers were still there. Fontaine writes of nine families living in houses built in a line inside the walls of a palisade fort made of stakes which were thick enough to sustain a musket shot. Approximately 20 feet across from the houses were sheds for hogs and hens and between the sties and the houses ran a street. In the center of the fort was a blockhouse which originally acted as a retreat if the settlers were unable to defend the palisades but ended up as the meeting house for religious services. Fontaine describes one of the congregation’s services where he claimed he was satisfied with singing of the psalms but nothing else impressed him. He tells of how the minister presented his party with smoked beef and cabbage which was “very ordinary and dirtily

³⁹ “Abstract of a Letter from North Carolina [*to Richard Beresford?*], July 4, 1716,” C) 5/1265. No. 68.

dressed,” and assessed that “the Germans live very miserably.” Fontaine also gives his opinion of the silver mining endeavor, stating that he took a sample of ore and “could not observe that there was any good mine. The Germans pretend that ‘tis a silver mine. We took some of the ore and endeavored to run it, but could get nothing out of it and I am of the opinion that it will not of anything.”⁴⁰

Fontaine’s writing presents a paradoxical picture of an old world meets new world settlement evident in his architectural descriptions. The fort represents the symbol of English frontier authority with its palisades meant to deter Indians, while the rows of houses inside with pigsties across from them demonstrate an attempt at European village domesticity.⁴¹ The appropriation of the guard house as a meeting place for religious services shows the repurposing of structures to supply a gathering center in either colonial war or German worship. The fact that the Germans were left to build the fort themselves again exemplifies the almost immediate assimilation process which found the settlers, mostly mine laborers, employed in building a structure that they would have little cause to build in their mother country. With a mix of old German religious tradition, environmental conditions in backcountry Virginia, the absence of any prospects at mining, an ambiguous relationship with the local authority, and an understanding that their term for service would only last four years, the Germanna settlers adapted to the

⁴⁰ Fontaine, *The Journal of John Fontaine* 88, 102.

⁴¹ For European architectural assertions of power see Patricia Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession in Europe’s Conquest of the New World 1492-1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

difficult colonial backcountry environment while waiting to create their own community at the end of their term of service.⁴²

The immigrants found that at the end of their term the act of extricating themselves from Spotswood's influence required more negotiations than they bargained for. Spotswood never formally contracted the labor from the settlers in a signed agreement, and soon disagreements over the labor the settlers had provided impeded the freedom the Germans desired. After several years of immigration, disputes between Spotswood and a second group of colonists of 1717 ended up with the Governor filing suits against the immigrants to recoup funds for lost labor. Spotswood, by this stage, considered the immigrants his tenants and as they gradually moved away from his large land patent to what is now Spotsylvania County, the governor tried to continue their servitude by suing them for money they could not pay. Their new settlement represented their determination to settle, to work, and to worship in a way they chose, although Spotswood tried to delay those aims as much as possible. The German's last step in securing their rights in the New World and complete the transatlantic process of community transference required them to assert themselves against the British colonial authority and claim their role as free landholders against Spotswood who hoped to get as much productivity out of the settlers as his energy and investment required. The German settlers were also participating as entrepreneurs on the frontier, a trend that would continue for settlers in the eighteenth century.

⁴² Hackett, *Backcountry Towns*, 31.

A description of the process in which the suits played out brings to light the channels of authority the settlers confronted in order to free themselves from the servitude system. With the prospect of a new settlement, a preacher, and limited support from the clergy in Europe, the colony was able to claim at least partial autonomy from Spotswood. The governor however made several attempts to prolong the colonists' servitude, fearing that the massive amount of land he had acquired under the pretext of German settlement would no longer have enough tenants, which would require him to return it to the crown.⁴³ In 1723, while the colonists were trying to leave the land Spotswood had settled them on, the governor filed an "Action of Debt" against Jacob Crigler, one of the 1717 colonists, for £34 which, after an extension, Crigler paid. Spotswood continued to bring suits against the settlers from 1723 to 1726 ranging between £3 2s. to £35. In an effort to state their case before the Spotsylvania County Court the colonists requested that the court allow them to see their copy of the covenant which Spotswood had never produced for them. They also asked the justices of the court to bear witness to the fact that Spotswood had not been forthcoming with the document, but the court refused to recognize the plea. The settlers then appealed to the House of Burgesses for a legal representative to argue on the Germans' behalf, claiming that Spotswood had arrested 25 of them without issuing a charge. With this appeal they also requested the House issue members of the colony passports for another journey to Europe to find a minister. Despite the Germans' appeals the court ruled in favor of Spotswood for

⁴³ For a description of the process of the acquisition and justification of Spotswood's land grants see: "Colonel Spotswood to Colonel Nathaniel Harrison, Deputy Auditor of H.M. Revenue, March 28, 1724 CO 5/1319, ff. 190-191v., 192v.-198v.

all thirteen suits. However, the court significantly reduced the payments to sums the immigrants could pay back over time.⁴⁴

The immigrants' appeals to the court system marks the final step in their full recognition as colonial subjects, completing the process from servitude to land owners. The suits brought against them by Spotswood demonstrate the governor's attempts to impose his authority as administrator of the group. The fact that Spotswood had many of the group arrested without charges further underscores his undue assertion of authority over the labor of the Germans. The immigrants, by fighting the suits, appealed to what was essentially the body of authority over Spotswood, the colony court system overseen by the House of Burgesses. When the local court refused their petitions the group persisted by requesting legal representation from the House of Burgesses. While the court eventually ruled in favor of Spotswood, the Germans' use of the colonial court system allowed them to bargain the terms down to a reasonable amount. The Germans, by using the colonial legal apparatus—the colonial authority—were able to finally extricate themselves from their immediate figure of authority, Spotswood, and begin their lives as free land holders.

The rewards, by accounts of the record, were well worth it. From a difficult journey and a very humble beginning on the frontier, the colonists now had the opportunity for ownership of considerable tracts of land. In 1727 this petition appeared in the Spotsylvania court records:

⁴⁴ "Complaints by Germans against Governor Spotswood," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 6, no. 4 (April 1899) 385-386.

On petition of Nicholas Yeager in order to prove his right to take up land according to his majesties royal charter, made oath that he came into this country about nine years in Capt. Scott and that he brought Mary his wife and two children named Adam and Mary with him, and that this is the first time of him proving the said importations whereupon certificate is ordered to be granted him rights to take up two hundred acres of land.⁴⁵

The petition granted land to Yeager as part of the Virginia General Assembly's Act of 1705 which granted 50 acres of land per family member to any freeman producing documentation of his passage and servitude. The act awarded the 1714 and 1717 colonists between 50 and 350 acres of land to 27 families between the years of 1725 and 1729.⁴⁶ When court granted the land, the clerk's office then produced a certificate which the grantee presented to a surveyor required to "within his respective precinct to survey for the party claiming and desiring the same, so much land not theretofore legally occupied or possessed by any other person as by the certificate shall appear to be due, and accordingly shall make a return thereof into the secretary's office to the end that a patent may issue thereupon."⁴⁷ In addition to claiming this land for his own use, the claimant could also sell his head rights.

The granting of land to the colonists signifies the beginning of a new chapter in the story westward expansion in Virginia. The ties that bound them to the Atlantic network of immigration loosened as they extricated themselves from Spotswood's patronage. The labor required by their service agreement bound them to the larger

⁴⁵ Spotsylvania County, *Virginia Order Book (1724-1730)* 142. Brown, James E. "Proofs of Importation of Germans to Spotsylvania County, Virginia 1724-1729, *Beyond Germanna* vol. 7, no. 5 (1995) 401.

⁴⁶ Spotsylvania County, *Virginia Order Book*, 142.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

structure of Atlantic commerce which used servitude to attract workers and settlers to North America. The granting of head rights indicated that a choice existed for colonists to participate further in the Atlantic exchange. Many began farming, now allowed to live, work, and pray in a much more independent fashion. Members of the second colony founded the Hebron congregation in 1734 and built a church in 1740, the longest operating Lutheran church in the United States. Preceding the large German immigration into the Shenandoah Valley in eighteenth century, the Germanna colonists represented a determined presence in the backcountry of Virginia, founding settlements which would act as starting points for further westward expansion.

Expedition to the Shenandoah Valley, 1716

On August 20, 1716 an expedition of men set out from Williamsburg, Virginia on their way to the Appalachian Mountains in the western region of the colony. Traveling by horse, they stayed with acquaintances along the way, partaking of the hospitality of their hosts as they rode away from the Chesapeake towns and into what was then the wilderness of the colonial frontier. For the most part the party would encounter fine food and lodging but occasionally the expedition would find themselves at a resting spot with “bad beds and indifferent entertainment.”⁴⁸ By the twenty-fifth of August they had reached the small community of Germanna on the western fork of the Rappahannock River where thirty to forty German miners lived. After inspection of ore in the region at least one member of the group came to the conclusion that no appreciable iron deposits

⁴⁸ Fontaine., *The Journal of John Fontaine*, 101.

existed in the region. It was here that they met Alexander Spotswood, who would lead the expedition. They also joined twelve local rangers and four Meherrin Indians who would all accompany them over the Blue Ridge Mountains into the unexplored territory of what is now the Shenandoah Valley. On August 29, 1716 the expedition moved out after having their horses shod the preceding day in order to ready their feet which were used to the gentle sandy soil of Tidewater Virginia. Their first camp west of Germanna they named “Expedition Run” where they were awakened by a trumpet at seven o’clock as their servants set out ahead of them, and when they made the next camp which they named Todd Camp they feasted on an abundance of roasted venison and retired to their tents.⁴⁹

The journey west was plagued by mishaps—the chronicler of the journey falling off a horse while trying to shoot a deer, the governor’s horses straying and delaying the party. They also endured sickness, with some members having to return home after complaining of fever. The expedition encountered bear, deer, and rattlesnakes as they travelled further into the wilderness, sometimes making fifteen miles a day and at other times only managing six. When camped they would build large fires and drink good liquor, admiring the gigantic timbers and good grasses of the region as they killed game along the way. Soon they passed the headwaters of the Rappahannock and turned southwest where they located the head of the James River. A horse was poisoned by a rattlesnake which seemed to be as abundant as the deer and bear in the area and as they

⁴⁹ Fontaine, *The Journal*, 103.

pressed on their men had to employ axes to clear the briars and heavy underbrush ahead of them.⁵⁰

On September 6th they reached a place called “Spotswood’s Camp” after crossing the Shenandoah River which they named the “Euphrates.” There they “drank some healths” after which some of the party went swimming and fished. One member engraved his name on a tree as Spotswood buried a bottle that contained a message claiming the territory for George I. Later that night the party drank the King’s health with champagne, and fired their guns, then drank to the health of the Prince with burgundy and fired another volley, and then after toasting the rest of the royal family with claret they fired a final round. They then continued sampling their liquor store with Virginia wine, brandy, rum, cherry punch, cider, Irish usquebaugh, chum, and water. They named two mountains on that day, the highest they called “Mount George” and the one they had crossed over most recently they named “Mount. Spotswood.”⁵¹

This was the pinnacle of the expedition by the group that Spotswood later named “The Knights of the Golden Horseshoe.” The firsthand account was relayed by John Fontaine. The expedition ostensibly represented a land speculation excursion, but judging from Fontaine’s account the much of the time was spent hunting, feasting, and drinking healths. Spotswood’s own account of the trip conveyed that sixty-three men were along with seventy-four horses and several dogs.⁵² Many of the men were notable personalities

⁵⁰ Fontaine, *The Journal*, 104-105.

⁵¹ Fontaine, *The Journal*, 106.

⁵² Porter, Alexander, “Introduction to Fontaine,” *The Journal*, 14.

in the colony, including Robert Beverly, the historian; Colonel George Mason; and William Robertson, the clerk of the Council and General Assembly in Williamsburg. All but two of these notables were to take up land grants in the headwaters region of the James where the expedition explored, taking possession of the land west of the Blue Ridge in the name of the King and themselves.

Although the reasons for the expedition lay in the economic motives of a passage to Cherokee territory, there was also a highly romanticized objective to the journey. The ceremonial aspects of the party's activity underscored a fascination with the adventure and potential of unexplored land. This element also highlighted the complete inexperience Spotswood and his companions had with the lands west of the Blue Ridge. His journey prompted petitions to the crown for the settlement of lands along the western expanses of the James which he believed would spur a migration to found new settlements and populate the backcountry with productive, rent paying, colonists.⁵³ Always with a mind for commerce, this feature of Spotswood's vision also reveals a tendency toward conquest for conquest's sake. The toasts the party raised to King George represent an Anglicized image for lands beyond the settlements of the colony. It is probable that during these moments Spotswood felt relief from the minutia of his office, indulging briefly in portentous self-satisfaction, and possibly reliving glories experienced on the battlefields of Europe. Here the position of royal official combined with aggrandizing patriotism, and after conferring the right to name a mountain after his

⁵³ Dodson, *Alexander Spotswood*, 237-238.

monarch, he also named one after himself. Spotswood, an energetic and motivated political, military, and economic administrator, indulged himself in romanticizing the duties of his position with the expedition, and the story of the “Knights of the Golden Horseshoe” became a mythologized portion of Virginia history into the twentieth century.

Print culture perpetuated this myth. From John Fontaine’s descriptive journal entries about the expedition to a 1721 poem written in Latin by president of William and Mary, William Blackmore, to fictionalized antebellum accounts by William Alexander Caruthers and Mary Johnston, and an essay by Woodrow Wilson about American expansion, the journey influenced romanticized versions of Virginia’s participation in the westward movement.⁵⁴ The attention the portrayal received by authors and historians reveal the desire of many Anglo-Americans to perpetuate the actions of conquest as claimants of a shared destiny. Spotswood and his companions probably felt a sense of this manufactured entitlement during their expedition. The evolution of print culture in the eighteenth century would augment this attitude and urge on westward settlement in works of history, fiction, as well as a growing trend toward pamphlets and eventually serialized publications such as gazettes.

Bernard Bailyn, who proclaimed the westward transatlantic movement of people as one of the greatest events in human history, chronicled the larger movement of

⁵⁴ Caruthers, William Alexander *The Knights of the Golden Horseshoe, a traditional Tale of the Cocked Hat Gentry in the Old Dominion* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1970) 213, Mary Johnston, *Audrey* (London: Constable & Co., 1912), Woodrow Wilson, “The Course of American History,” in *Woodrow Wilson: Essential Writings and Speeches of the Scholar-president* Mario R. DiNunzio, ed. (New York: New York University Press, 206).

immigrants to British North America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The “mighty flow” to the colonies that Bailyn identifies as “Volkerwanderrungen” integrated a number of European folkways into colonial life as immigrants met, became neighbors, and formed regional community systems which would bring definition to different geographies of North American culture, making it distinctive from European society. Colonial political and economic structures aided this Americanization process by supplying employment, labor, land, print material, and governance to immigrants; making them part of the colonial project while requiring them to pay taxes on property in return. As settlers from Europe continued to populate the North American frontier and intermingle with fellow immigrants from differing European cultures, colonial authority structured immigrants’ movements and settlement in numerous ways, overseeing the formation of an Anglicized American colonial identity based on the assimilation of Old World traditions into a New World colonial precedent. The transatlantic network influenced this process by channeling thousands of European immigrants into the colonies in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. A sporadically fluid system of arrangements that did not always operate like clockwork, passage to the colonies from continental European locations provided risk for investors and immigrants. Spotswood’s project to employ Germans in the political economy of the colony at the beginning of the eighteenth century represented just one of many migrations that contained economic and imperial aims. Spotswood’s initiative fell short and met with contention from the settlers, but it foretold the inevitability of the westward expansion that the network of entrepreneurial newlanders facilitated during the colonial period. Spotswood’s official

and entrepreneurial roles combined to allow a trend toward settlement away from the Chesapeake elites, creating a potentially dynamic multiculturalism that included Indians, English, and German immigrants on the frontier of the colony. As in most cases in Virginia colonial history, this push had its dark side, because Spotswood also began joining the trend to use slave labor to work the enormous tracts of land he had acquired during his governorship, while also continuing the encroachment of traditional Indian lands west of the fall line. All of these factors portended a transition in Virginian colonial culture, foretelling a thrust of immigration into the Shenandoah Valley and beyond in the coming decades, but also proliferating the change to slave-culture as expansion created demand for larger and cheaper sources of labor.

Alexander Spotswood left office in 1722 after a continued deterioration of relations between the office of governor and the assembly. In his twelve years as governor he had improved the overall economic outlook of the colony, but considerably less than he had hoped. Opposition from landed gentry in the lower house prevented him from reaching his goals, especially in area of tobacco reform. He also faced problems in his efforts to efficiently populate the backcountry. Iron mining and manufacture materialized only painstakingly. Meanwhile the lure of cheap labor in slaves tempted many in the colony to abandon the indentured servant system for laborers with little to no restrictions for how they were used. Spotswood, after his early years of quelling unrest on the southern borders, managed to keep the colony relatively secure from invasion, but at the price of displacing Indians from their native homelands. He worked hard to support a royally backed Indian trading company but met with opposition there as well, most

notably, not surprisingly, from the heir to the Indian trading empire, William Byrd II. He expanded the knowledge of the Shenandoah Valley with his journey over the Blue Ridge, but the settlements he foresaw only began to take root decades later.

But these limited successes and disappointments only reveal the amount of energy Spotswood brought to the project. His military background is apparent in every aspect of his administration, his outspoken tenacity against the entrenched elite, his appropriation-minded correspondence with the Board of Trade, his interest in the diplomatic relations that would bring martial stability to the colony, and his Anglicized loyalty to king and country apparent in his claims beyond the Blue Ridge. Many of his projects found legs in the succeeding generation, although to the benefit of the European colonists not to indigenous people and African slaves. Through his service in the army he honed administrative and entrepreneurial skills, proposing what he hoped to be effective campaigns to raise royal revenue for the benefit of the crown and the colony. Later in life Spotswood received the office of Postmaster General, managing to extend the postal service to Williamsburg as channels of colonial communications began their eighteenth-century evolution. He died on June 6, 1740 while planning for a new military campaign against the Spanish in the Caribbean.

CHAPTER VI

“OF PUBLIC USE AND BENEFIT,” WILLIAM PARKS AND PRINT CULTURE IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY VIRGINIA

If what is thus publish'd be good, Mankind has the Benefit of it. If it be bad (I speak now in general without any design'd Application to any particular Piece whatever) the more 'tis made publick, the more its Weakness is expos'd, and the greater Disgrace falls upon the Author, whoever he be, who is at the same Time depriv'd of an Advantage he would otherwise without fail make use of.¹

Benjamin Franklin

Wafer, Byrd, Beverley, and Spotswood all used the Atlantic networks of trade and information to advance their entrepreneurial aims. Wafer and Beverley used transatlantic print culture to publish information about the scope and environment of Britain's broadening imperial reach. Byrd and Spotswood furthered that reach with continual official and commercial correspondence that solidified some of the economic conditions of the colony. William Parks, Virginia's first official printer, institutionalized a network of information in Virginia by producing its first weekly newspaper and a revised volume of its laws. Parks represents the further legitimizing of the British colony of Virginia, his newspaper bringing the anglicized order of society and economy to the Chesapeake in published form.

¹ "Statement of Editorial Policy," *The Pennsylvania Gazette*, July 24, 1740.

For the purposes of this study, Parks represents an entrepreneur who directly aided in the transformation and consolidation of eighteenth-century southern colonial culture. He actively sought to gain access to and exploit markets as a mouthpiece for anglophile sensibilities and regional commercial concerns. His wide-ranging experience in the highly competitive print-market of England assisted in his colonial success, while his ambition to explore larger and more challenging audiences allowed him access, after several unsuccessful attempts, to a consumer culture that could sustain him. In the colonies he used his position as official state printer to further solidify his success and the legitimacy of colonial businesses. He negotiated his position within a sophisticated network of information dissemination, dealing with a multitude of complex social questions. As a result, Parks displayed several qualities of an entrepreneur explicitly, the desire for profit, the complicated planning involved in opening a print shop, assessment of customer needs, adaptability to market demands, innovation in providing original materials, and careful valuation of risk needed for all businesses. In addition, because of his position as printer, Parks helped to strengthen an environment of entrepreneurial activity in the colonies by providing a commercial outlet for consumers and sellers that could provide marketable information on a weekly basis. He also reinforced imperial goals in the colony by providing a newspaper modeled after publications in England that sought to emphasize national aims.

Two conditions in Parks' success in the colonies stand out regarding his entrepreneurial character and his role in the transformation of Virginia. The first is his relationship with colonial authority. Parks, in his early years in England, worked

constantly under the threat of government censure, having to curb any inclination toward criticism of government officials or institutions. Although there is some speculation that Parks ran into trouble concerning government censure early in his career, as he gained experience the printer learned, like many of his peers, to walk a line that brought entertainment and news to his readership without attracting the negative attention of authorities. This quality may have served him well as the Maryland assembly considered employing an official printer. Parks, probably recruited in England, petitioned the Maryland government to print the existing laws of the colony and begin work as the colony's official printer. He would repeat the proposal, unsolicited, two years later in Virginia. Parks could not have hoped to enjoy this kind of political endorsement in England. As official printer he could set up his shop near the assembly in the town center, representing a kind of commercial and social forum for the business of the colony. This support, combined with nonexistent competition in both colonies (the nearest print shop was in Philadelphia) allowed for sustained success of Parks' printing operations.¹

The second element that aids in the understanding of Parks as an agent for change in the colony is the publication of his newspapers. Both *The Maryland Gazette* and *The Virginia Gazette* offer a broad view to the consumer-base that Parks served. Material

¹ Two biographies of Parks exist, Lawrence C. Wroth's, *William Parks: Printer and Journalist of England and America* (Richmond: The Appeals Press, Inc., 1926), and A. Franklin Parks, *William Parks: The Colonial Printer in the Transatlantic World of the Eighteenth Century* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012). These works allow a chronology of Parks' early life as an apprentice to emerge, and Franklin Parks' work includes images of examples of printed material either published by Parks or his contemporaries. The first segment of this chapter draws on the work of these scholars and uses some references to figures in Parks' monograph as primary sources, giving credit to the author's work. See also: J.A. Leo Lemay, *Men of Letters in Colonial Maryland* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 1972) 11-125.

ranging from social satire, true crime, sermons, foreign and domestic news, poems, and business news combined to provide a consistent connection to the commercial and social world of the English Atlantic. Parks modeled his colonial newspapers after those he had operated in England, but he adapted to the conditions of the colonies by providing news and articles that reinforced local concerns while simultaneously tying colonists to English culture by printing articles from popular London periodicals. Most revealing are the newspapers' advertisements. The notices, many of them announcing the reward for the return of a slave or a servant, demonstrate how, even with English-leaning sentiment, the colonies represented a distinct commercial world interconnected with transatlantic and intercolonial concerns, but also forming its own particular social conditions that would sustain it into the middle of the century.²

Parks as Apprentice

Susanna Parks, wife of William Parks of Ludlow, Southeast Shropshire, in the West Midlands of England, gave birth to their son, also named William, on May 23rd, 1699. His father belonged to the yeoman class, a position that held a slightly higher social

² The colonial era *Maryland Gazette* and *Virginia Gazette* are available online. Archivist have scanned and (in some cases) transcribed most existing issues. They can be accessed at: <http://msa.maryland.gov/megafile/msa/speccol/sc2900/sc2908/html/mdgazette.html> and <http://www.accessible-archives.com/collections/the-virginia-gazette/> respectively. Broad scholarship on newspapers and the press in Colonial America exists, and though this chapter focuses on how entrepreneurs operated and aided others entrepreneurs through their periodicals, other assessments of the importance of early American newspapers include: Edwin Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1972); William David Sloan and Julie Hedgepeth Williams, *The Early American Press: 1690-1783* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994); John B. Hench, ed., *Three Hundred Years of the American Newspaper* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1991); Hiley H. Ward, *Mainstreams of American Media History: A Narrative and Intellectual History* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1997); Elizabeth Christine Cook, *Literary Influences in Colonial Newspapers: 1704-1750* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1912).

rank than that of tradesmen and laborers. The elder William's occupation probably meant a type of skilled farming requiring the leasing of land but occasionally land ownership as well. Often the position extended to local trade professions such as brewers, coal masters and merchants. Records indicate that beyond this occupational status, Parks' father held a respectable position in his parish serving as a signatory on several community projects.

The younger William Parks lived in Shropshire for ten years, a region whose economy relied chiefly on agriculture, primarily sheep and cattle husbandry, for ten years. His position did not allow for the type of social climbing of those with status higher than him, therefore his primary chance to for advancement lay in apprenticeship. He most likely attended a local grammar school in the town of Bitterly, allowing him the basic but well taught foundations of reading, writing, mathematics, and Latin. The young Parks may have shown a particular aptitude in his studies, prompting his father to choose for him an occupational apprenticeship that required keen understanding of letters and composition, some mechanical and technical ability, and rudimentary economics required of small businessmen. His apprenticeship in a print shop most likely started at the age of eleven or twelve, when his father signed him on to Stephen Bryan in the town of Worcester, forty miles from his home, paying £10 for the opportunity of his son to learn the craft and business of printing.³

³ Parks, *William Parks*, 4-8. Lawrence C. Wroth, *William Parks*, 9-12. The press in eighteenth-century Britain should not be underestimated in the overall cultural changes and fabric of political and social life. Extensive scholarship on the subject contextualizes this subject within Britain's imperial history. Some major works include: Joseph Frank, *The Beginning of the English Newspaper: 1620-1660* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1961); R.M. Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State Press, 1965); Joad Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper:*

The beginning of Parks' apprenticeship would have been a mix of seemingly endless menial tasks and an education where Bryan acted as instructor and employer. The printer's apprentice more than likely learned his occupation using a wooden press whose design had not changed significantly since the time of Guttenberg in the fifteenth century. In a market as small as Worcester, he and Bryan may have been the only workers in the shop. As he learned tasks such as "beating," the process of applying ink to the typeset, and "pulling," the impressing of the type onto paper, he also carried out more mundane jobs; cleaning, carrying messages, delivery, and watching the store during its owner's absences. He usually worked a minimum of ten hours, and often sixteen, hours a day. Despite the rigors of his role as shop boy, Parks could look to Bryan as a mentor, with the hopes of gaining future positions based on his own efforts combined with the reputation and recommendation of his employer. His shop may have been humble, but Bryan, by example, exhibited the possibilities for an apprentice who successfully served out his full term. Bryan had apprenticed with a master printer, Bennett Griffin, in London. When Griffin died, Bryan moved to Oxford as an apprentice to Lewis Thomas, working there until 1706. These credentials put him on firm footing to establish his own printing house in the west country, and set an example for new apprentices like Parks.⁴

English Newsbooks, 1641-1649 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1987); Robert R. Rea, *The English Press in Politics, 1760-1774* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1963); Bob Clark, *From Grub Street to Fleet Street: An Illustrated History of English Newspapers to 1899* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004); Carolyn Nelson, Matthew Secombe, eds., *British Newspapers and Periodicals, 1641-1700: A Short-Title Catalogue of Serials Printed in England, Scotland, Ireland, and British America* (New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 1987).

⁴ Parks, *William Parks*, 10-11. Joseph Moxon, *Mechanick Exercises on the Whole Art of Printing*, ed. Herbert Davis and Harry Carter, 2nd ed. (London: 1683; repr., New York: Dover Press, 1987) 46. For information about child apprentices in England see: Patrick Wallis, "Apprenticeship and Training in

Parks continued his apprenticeship in Worcester, forming his own sensibilities about the technical, financial, and political implications of his profession. Worcester offered a commercial environment that could demonstrate to the young Parks the possibilities of printing in a locale removed somewhat from the farm-based life of his first ten years in Shropshire. The county town of Worcestershire, at the time of Parks' apprenticeship, presented a vibrant market for manufactured clothing, cattle, and agricultural products. In this environment he experienced mercantilism, entrepreneurship, and political discourse in the completing of his daily tasks, whether delivering printed items to a cloth merchant or helping to print advertisements and announcements supporting the local business economy in the town. Bryan, not long past the end of his own apprenticeship, may have provided an older-brotherly point-of-view to the opportunities of this commercial world. In addition, Bryan attempted to appeal to his politically diverse readership, one which included conservative Tories and progressive Whigs. This appeal, designed to avoid the possibility of alienating one political party or the other, attempted a political neutrality which hoped to build readership of the shop's publications and exempt the publisher from government scrutiny and penalty.⁵

Premodern England," *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 68, No. 3 (Sep., 2008), pp. 832-861; Tim Leunig, Chris Minns and Patrick Wallis, "Networks in the Premodern Economy: The Market for London Apprenticeships, 1600—1749," *The Journal of Economic History* Vol. 71, No. 2 (June, 2011), pp. 413-443; Alys Levene, "'Honesty, Sobriety and Diligence': Master-Apprentice Relations in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century England," *Social History*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (May, 2008), pp. 183-200.

⁵ William Bennett, "A Note on the *Worcester Postman*," *Book Collector's Quarterly* 14 (1934) 78. Government censorship posed a real and ever present threat to publishers of this era. Accusations of sedition could bring heavy fines, imprisonment, time at the pillory, and in the most severe cases execution. See, Parks, *William Parks*, 11-13, G.A. Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1978) 117, and Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (Sydney, Croom Helm Press, 1987) 13.

The rising diversity of printing needs at the beginning of the eighteenth century could sometimes offset the pressures of keeping the print shop profitable. Bryan's chief publication, *The Worcester Post-Man*, required weekly output and as wide a readership as Bryan could attract, but because the newspaper could not financially carry the print shop on its own, Bryan, like many other printers, supplemented his income by taking as many other jobs as were available. These jobs included printing specialized and personalized stationary, sales notices, tickets, playbills, school materials, and bonds. Printers often attracted customers by offering book printing and binding as well. This diversity of printing needs resulted in the growth of local print shops, publishers, and newsweeklies outside of London, Cambridge, and Oxford at the beginning of the century. Like Parks, who learned to read in a local grammar school, occupants in the provinces experienced a growth in literacy that motivated their interest in printed news and information at the national and local level. Although these factors in and of themselves did not offer a guarantee of profitability for independent print shops, the growth of literacy and reading needs aided Parks in his education and provided a foundation for his future ventures in England and the colonies.⁶

⁶ Another crucial factor in the proliferation of printing, especially of provincial newspapers, in the early eighteenth century was the lapsing of the 1663 licensing act which controlled the press and private publications. The act, un-renewed in 1695, allowed for the founding of numerous provincial newspapers and publications, Parks, *William Parks*, 13-14, Black, *The English Press*, 12, H.R. Fox Bourne, *English Newspapers: Chapters in the History of Journalism*, 2 vols. (New York: Russell and Russell, 1966) 1:54-57, R.M Wiles, *Freshest Advices: Early Provincial Newspapers in England* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1965) 95-96. John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) 88-90.

Parks ended his apprenticeship with Bryan in 1718 and returned to his home of Ludlow at the age of twenty where he founded the town's first print shop and newspaper, the *Ludlow Post-Man*. His early apprenticeship should not be underestimated when considering his maturing into the printer he would become in Maryland and Virginia. This era, representing Parks' most impressionable years, set the apprentice on a track toward entrepreneurial failure and success. Bryan, like many apprentice's masters, played a significant role in Parke's developing understanding of the role of print material in commercial, social, and political life. To Parks, Bryan's operation revealed the merging of printed material, information distribution, and commerce. Apart from the publishing of books which took longer to produce and were required to last much longer, newspapers allowed for an immediacy for distributed information, establishing a connection between urban and rural life. The printer employed carriers to haul his papers to a distant readership, these carriers in turn bringing news from other regions and the capital. Bryan ran his publication in a manner indicative of the prudence requires of a publisher of his day. He walked a fine line of appealing to his readership while not stirring the rancor of the governing authority. This meant restraint from direct editorials against government policies that could jeopardize his ability to print and distribute. It also meant that Bryan should play a role as a mouthpiece for local trade and manufacturing, a concern that was often at odds with the government. The diplomacy involved in operating a newsweekly allowed printers like Bryan to protect themselves from governmental scrutiny but also ensured that as supporter of the local economy their papers would increase subscriptions and create potential revenue through advertising. Keeping out of the limelight in order to

protect his publishing interests, Bryan undoubtedly influenced his apprentice on the partially anonymous role of the newspaper editor. Parks certainly demonstrated this quality as a publisher in Maryland and Virginia, perhaps even more so because he had to appeal to the interests of slave-culture planters who saw themselves as an extension of the English elite in a contentious and volatile political environment.⁷

The *Ludlow Post-Man* signals a prototype of publications Parks would produce in the colonies. On the front piece of the first issue of the newspaper, dated Friday, October 9, 1719, the *Post-Man* declared itself to be “a true and impartial collection of the most material transactions, both home and abroad.” Parks’ applied his own intentions to the beginning essay describing the publication of “a weekly newspaper, which I intend (with God’s permission) to publish every Friday morning at Ludlow, and will be dispersed 30 or 40 miles round by men employed for that purpose.”⁸ As this announcement indicates, the paper related news from Britain and abroad, often describing highway crime amid matters of national concern such as escalating tension with Italy and Spain and the speculation that caused the South Sea bubble. This news usually came from larger urban papers, reproduced in local publications in a system which is echoed in the use of Associated Press and United Press International reports in modern city and local

⁷ Parks, *William Parks*, 21-22, Wroth, *William Parks*, 10.

⁸ *The Ludlow Post-Man*, October 9, 1719, from Parks, *William Parks*, 27 (fig.1). See also: Katherine Kirtley Weed and Richmond Pugh Bond, “Studies of British Newspapers and Periodicals from Their Beginning to 1800: A Bibliography,” *Studies in Philology*, vol. 43, Extra Series No. 2 (Dec., 1946), pp. i-vi.

newspapers.⁹ His assurance of fair and unbiased news reporting surfaces, also in his first issue of the *Ludlow Post-man*, when he asserts, “We will do all the justice we can to any person, but injury to no man; we resolve to be of no party, and to meddle with no quarrels public or private, civil or religious.” Parks also represented a departure from Bryan’s publication in Worcester with the increased use of pieces not pertaining to politics, crime, and international affairs. The *Ludlow Post-Man* featured several non-news related essays, stories, satires and verse popularly known as “entertainments,” meant to appeal to both men and women readership. These pieces worked to balance the political news and further establish the publisher’s objectivity by offering relatively neutral and pre-vetted stories to underscore the printer’s aim to present a “true and impartial collection.” The appeal to an audience made up of both sexes is implicit in a statement by its editor, “I shall endeavor likewise to please the fair sex, by inserting (now and then) some entertainments for their diversion (hoping to find their pleasure by their encouragement).”¹⁰ Parks invites an audience that enjoyed an element of public scandal and intrigue and probably familiar with established periodicals like the *Tatler* and *Spectator*. Published pieces could include suggestive descriptions of young courtship, at

⁹ The first comprehensive copyright law, the Statute of Anne, was established in England 1710, but widespread use of other authors’ work was still common and excepted in Parks’ day, especially in America where a similar law would not be enacted until 1790. For works on the establishment and enforcement of intellectual property laws see: Peter Baldwin, *The Copyright Wars: Three Centuries of Trans-Atlantic Battle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014); Ron Deazly, *On the Origin of the Right to Copy: Charting the Movement of Copyright Law in Eighteenth Century Britain (1695-1775)* (New York: Hart Publishing, 2004); Jody Greene, *The Trouble with Ownership: Literary Property and Authorial Liability in England, 1660-1730* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2005); Oren Bracha, “The Ideology of Authorship Revisited: Authors, Markets, and Liberal Values in Early American Copyright,” *The Yale Law Journal*, Vol. 118, No. 2 (Nov., 2008), pp. 186-271.

¹⁰ *The Ludlow Post-Man*, October 9, 1719.

first filched directly from the *Spectator* and later produced independently, relaying advices meant to protect participants in illicit liaisons from discovery and public disgrace. These passages predict the popularity of a modern newspaper staple, the advice column.¹¹

Park's first attempt at his own printing house ultimately failed, probably in no small part due to the newspaper. He had banked on the popularity of the diversity of his articles. The standard foreign and domestic news appealed to professionals such as merchants, tradesmen and investors. The entertainments appealed to women, youth, and male professionals alike, bringing humor, poetry, and romanticized fiction to a perceived wider audience. But, at such a young age, he struggled to build readership, possibly because he did not include news of local events. He also lacked advertising revenue, either by a youthful lack of understanding of the importance of commercial announcements, a disinterested local business community, or both. These reasons likely contributed to the already nearly impossible task of making money on newspapers. Although Parks, like Bryan, diversified his small business by taking numerous other print and binding jobs, the newspaper acted as a publisher's flagship and an advertisement in and of itself for the printer. But it proved a costly endeavor for the eighteenth century entrepreneur. The struggle to print a weekly newspaper required a major investment for the printing press, type of numerous fonts, paper, ink, and workers. Paper, required to have a government stamp, cost one penny per sheet, this for a publication that usually

¹¹ Parks, *William Parks* 26-27. See also William Lee, "The Ludlow Postman," *Notes and Queries*, 3rd ser., 9;92-94.

sold at 1 ½ pennies each.¹² In addition, Parks at this early stage may have leased his equipment or bought in on credit—the total investment for an early eighteenth century print shop averaging £300.¹³ These expenses and investments, at least in the early years of a new print shop, created the kind of margin that rarely produced profits, much less stability and success for the printer. Later, in his colonial ventures, Parks demonstrated a mature attention to the influence of advertising as a source of revenue as well as an important gauge of a community's economic needs and values. He also intuitively understood the importance of courting the colonial authority to officially support his ventures and become his most consistent client. With these factors, he could sustain the costs of publishing a newspaper. But in Ludlow in 1719, he had not yet formed the connections and business experience to explore or exploit these avenues.¹⁴

In 1721 Parks moved his operation west to the town of Hereford and perhaps due to the town's stagnated markets, chose to focus on book printing rather than attempt a newsweekly which depended on a vibrant local social and economic climate. Books, however, showed not much more potential for profit, especially in a small market. Still, demand for locally printed works could arise if London publishers could not meet demand. The most popular, therefore profitable, of these were theological works, medical books, and local histories. Local clerics often sought at their own expense to publish their sermons. Parks encountered these types of print jobs in both Worcester and Ludlow, and

¹² R.M Wiles, *Freshest Advices*, 95-96.

¹³ John Feather, *The Provincial Book Trade*, 88-90.

¹⁴ Parks, *William Parks*, 31-32.

probably wanted to hone his skill while bringing in income with the production of self-published books. One of his first works in the Hereford print shop was entitled *PASHA, or, Dr. Prideaux's Vindication of the Rule and Table for Finding Easter in the Book of Common-Prayer Briefly Examined. By a Well Wisher of the Starry Science, and a Reverencer of Sacred Times*¹⁵. An argument for the relocation of Easter based on previous almanacs' errors, the work represents the type of publication clerics undertook in the early eighteenth century to further their careers through public exposure.

Hereford, like Ludlow, proved to be a dead end in Parks' career, forcing the young printer to look for more advantageous opportunities. Small businesses in the rural towns of west England suffered from slow economic growth and often insurmountable competition from cities. Entrepreneurs regularly faced the reality that relocating to urban markets and adapting to trends therein offered the only prospect in security and advancement. Parks, after two failed independent ventures in demographically limited locales must have realized that his skills would not be marketable if there were no markets. Fortunately, by the early 1720s Parks owned the tools of his trade, which were relatively easy to move. He also made the decision after his two outings as an independent printer to lessen the risk of his investment and take on a partner. He and David Kinnier opened a print shop in Reading, a town directly connected by river and road to England's commercial, political, and social center, London. The large town

¹⁵ *PASHA, or, Dr. Prideaux's Vindication of the Rule and Table for Finding Easter in the Book of Common-Prayer Briefly Examined. By a Well Wisher of the Starry Science, and a Reverencer of Sacred Times*, (Hereford, UK: William Parks, 1721), Bodleian Library, BOD Bookstacks Vet. A4 e. 577.

operated as an entrepôt and staging center for rural farm produce, especially grain, entering London by barge on the Thames. Reading also provided a stopping point for travelers on their way to and from the capital city. Much more so than Ludlow, and Hereford, and reminiscent of Parks' early years in Worcester, Reading supplied the printers with a commercial district along major thoroughfares where they could open their printing business on the busy business avenue, High Street.¹⁶

The diversity of printed and engraved items reveal the ambition and skill of the printers as well as the market they expected to serve. Parks and Kinnier shared many of the same skills, although even at his young age Parks represented the senior partner. Both had apprenticed under experienced and well-established printers and were equally adept at producing newspapers, books and engravings. In addition, Kinnier may have influenced Parks adaptation to a market so closely connected to London. Kinnier had apprenticed there earning valuable familiarity (more so than his partner) as a bookseller. The two recognized at the outset the potential for a local newspaper, something Reading lacked. The partners sought to remedy this by providing "historical and political observations on the most remarkable transactions in Europe; collected from the best and most authentic accounts." In addition to printing a newspaper, the printing house advertised itself as a place, "Where all manner of printing business is handsomely done, as books, advertisements, summons, subpoenas, funeral-tickets, etc. Shopkeepers bills are

¹⁶ Parks, *William Parks*, 41,43. Reading's place in the commercial world is highlighted in : Judith Hunter, *A History of Berkshire* (Charlottesville, digitalized at University of Virginia, original publisher Phillimore, 1911); Stuart Hylton, *Reading Then and Now* (London: Pavilion Books, 2011).

done here after the best manner, with the prints of their signs, or other proper ornaments. Also gentlemen may have their coats of arms, or other fancies curiously cut in wood or engraved in metal.”¹⁷ Included in a target market with clergymen, merchants, lawyers, and shopkeepers, are petty aristocrats (or those with such ambitions), the notice appealing to familial vanity and possibly the first bourgeoisie clientele for Parks since Worcester. The notice is also indication of Parks growing understanding of the support his ventures required from an established business community, one with needs ranging from advertisements and signage to more personal displays of family lineage. In the coming years the colonies of Maryland and Virginia provided the environment from which Parks could exercise lessons he learned in Reading. Parks, understood that a customer-base that self-identified with the English upper-class would receive messages reinforcing this perception favorably. Eventually Parks honed his ability to exploit this type of aggrandizing pride among the planters and burgesses of the Chesapeake.

Parks continued his partnership with Killier until early 1724 when he relocated to London. He appears to have learned from his mistakes of neglecting local concerns in the *Ludlow Postman*. Early issues of the *Mercury* described Reading in flattering terms, and focused on the town’s major concern, grain prices and market reports. The editors provided less filler in the form of entertainments. Perhaps because of adjustments to the demands of readership, and a maturing comprehension of the market in regard to printing needs, the Reading venture enjoyed some success. Speculation as to why Parks left a

¹⁷ *The Reading Mercury of Weekly Entertainer*, July 8, 1723, from Parks, *William Parks*, 42 (fig. 5).

venture that promised some stability points most convincingly to Parks' continued desire to experience larger and more dynamic markets. This ambition required Parks to turn his attention directly to the capital. He employed his lesson from Reading and took a partner, John Lightbody, an established publisher with Tory sentiments but without a newspaper. The shop stood in the questionable district named Black and White Court near the Old Bailey, in close proximity to Fleet and Newgate prisons, in an area known for criminals, lawyers, and newsmen. There Parks began his fourth newspaper.¹⁸

The *Half-Penny London Journal* belonged to a group of ten newspapers in London that published three times a week. Direct competition, therefore, proved to be much stiffer than what Parks experienced with his earlier ventures. Coffeehouse readership represented a particularly vital market, prompting newspapers to tread carefully or risk arousing the attention of government officials ready to charge a publisher with sedition. Extreme punishments for libel or sedition included the pillory, jail, and seizure or destruction of the printers' property. With so much information in circulation vulnerable to the interpretation of a wary and reactive government, Parks continued honing his ability to provide benign entertainment and neutral news stories. Here is another important aspect of parks' development not only as a printer but as an entrepreneur. Parks needed to understand risks of his venture fully, whether it be lack of readership and distribution or the threat of government charges of criminal sedition.

¹⁸ Llewelyn C. Lloyd, "The Book Trade in Shropshire," *Transactions of the Shropshire Archeological and Natural History Society* 48 (1936): 153; William Mitchell "William Parks of London?" *Factotum* 40 (1995) 4; Jeremy Black, *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Croom Helm, 1987); H.R. Fox Bourne, *English Newspapers: Chapters in the History of Journalism* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1966) 118-119.

Increased competition in London from other newspapers combined with an increasing awareness of a watchful authority required Parks to further develop tendencies of foresighted planning and risk management that he carried to the Chesapeake.¹⁹

The tumultuous nature of news printing in early eighteenth-century London ultimately influenced Parks' entrepreneurial aspirations to be introduced to a more dynamic, complex, and politically dangerous publishing environment than his previous ventures. The *Half-Penny Journal* skirted controversial political debates of the day by reporting on other subjects of popular interest such as local crime stories, advice essays, and pieces on human behavior and the natural world. Popular science, perhaps because of its unrelated position to contentious city and national politics, became the most prominent of topics of this type. A serialized true crime story about housebreaker and Newgate escapee Jack Sheppard provided a popular apolitical diversion as well. The newspaper sensationalized the story where Sheppard "having now got clear of his prison, he took a coach disguised in a nightgown at the corner of the Old Bailey, along with a man who waited for him in the street (and is supposed to be Page the Butcher) ordering the coachman to drive to Black Fryer's Stairs, where his prostitute gave him the meeting and the three took boat."²⁰ The active narrative that includes butcher accomplices, prostitutes, nightgown disguises, and broken prison chains, demonstrate the demographic of local readership in and around Black and White Court. Readers would recognize the place names within the events, and be familiar with the professions and characters represented

¹⁹ Parks, *William Parks*, 54-57.

²⁰ *The Half-Penny Journal*, October, 29, 1724. From Parks, *William Parks*, 50 (fig. 6).

in the tale, more than likely rooting for Sheppard who became a celebrity in England. Beyond that Lightbody and Parks understood that serialized stories such as the one about Sheppard could promise repeat customers drawn to the next edition for the latest installment of the tale. Stories about the natural world, satires, verse, advises, and serialized true crime and adventure stories suggest a demographic whose main aim leaned toward entertainment and sensation and leaned away from political controversy. Parks' experiences in London reflect his continuing effort to hone his craft and business sense by widening his readership with responses to a particular markets' demand.

Assessing Parks' successes and failures during his early career in England suggests two reasons for his departure from his homeland and emigration to the Americas. On one hand the risk and failure he experienced in Ludlow and Hereford may have prompted him to keep looking for better prospects and adjust his business methods and expectations to forge an upward career path. Some of the extant evidence suggests that he learned to better anticipate and exploit his markets in more established commercial environments such as Reading and London and in doing so actively primed himself for the challenge of the colonies, so that Maryland and Virginia represent capstones in his career. But another view is that, after four publishing ventures in west and central England, Parks found that professional competition, the expenses of news and book printing, the unsavory environment of Black and White Court, and the difficulty of staying in the authorities' good graces left little financial prospect for him and his family. Like most entrepreneurs, sustained consistent success rarely graced Parks' career. His early years prepared him for the challenges of printing in English markets but may not

have been enough for him there. Understanding that America offered much less competition, a less scrutinizing governmental authority, less complex urban environments, and a potentially ready reading public with strong cultural associations with Britain, Parks moved his family, possibly to New York or Philadelphia first, but eventually to Annapolis in the mid-1720s.

Parks in the Chesapeake

There exist no records detailing Parks' journey or arrival in the colonies. Similarly, there is no documentary evidence of how and where Parks first came to be in a position to apply for the job of Maryland printer. Speculation arises as to whether the printer had family or professional connections in Maryland. Parks' name stopped appearing on the *Half-Penny London Journal* in early 1725 and his proposal to the Maryland houses of assembly are dated March, 1726. This would suggest a period of travel to the colonies and a possible adjustment period or temporary employment in Philadelphia or New York. What is known is that Maryland's lower house actively sought a printer to set up a press in Annapolis in November of 1725. The need stemmed from the lower house having to oversee and contract governmental printing by the Philadelphia printer Andrew Bradford. The upper house grudgingly agreed to "give reasonable encouragement to the first person who would set up a printing press." The reason for the resistance of members of the Maryland house lay in large part in the reluctance to having votes and governmental debates being on public display.²¹

²¹ *Archives of Maryland, Proceedings and Acts of the General Assembly, 1724-1726*, Assembly Proceedings October 6-November 6 1725. vol. 25, 406.



Figure 6. *A Map of the British Empire in America*, Henry Popple (London, 1733). Accessed from the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts Online Collection, <http://mesda.org>.

It is possible that officials in Maryland sent word to London that they sought an experienced printer and that either an associate recommended Parks or Parks himself took advantage of the notice. The confidence with which the lower house, led by influential member Thomas Bordley, petitioned for a press strongly indicates that recruitment of

Parks had taken place as early as Spring, 1725. The relentless competitive atmosphere of London's printing world offered only professional confinement and limited career prospects, so much that a calculated risk in the New World as the official printer to the Maryland colony would be a welcome fresh start. The possibility also exists that recruitment of Parks occurred when the printer was already in the colonies. There are no official indications that Parks competed with any other printer for the job, so, based only on circumstantial evidence that put Parks in England in 1725 and Maryland in 1726, it is probable that Parks represented the Maryland lower house's one and only choice for the position. Parks, at age twenty-seven, with at least fifteen years' experience in English printing markets, possessed enough ability to satisfy the lower house of the assembly and influence Maryland to accept his business proposal.

Parks presented his petition for employment to the Maryland houses of assembly in March 1726. The three-part petition began, "He the said William Parks doth propose to print a body of such provincial laws as hereafter shall be made at each sessions of assembly for every member of the assembly each commissioner of the peace for the time being and for each county court of the province." He outlined the fair payment for the types of printing he planned to provide. For the provincial laws, passed at each session and delivered to assembly members, commissioners, and county courts he requested two thousand pounds of tobacco from each county for every session of the assembly, allowing him a gross payment of about £100 a session. For journals of speeches and debates Parks suggested more flexibility which would be beneficial to both the printer and his employer because no one could predict the length of the journals due to the protracted nature of

debates. Parks proposed being paid by the page, although he left it up to the assembly to set the price. In the third section of the proposal Parks made a bid that reflected his desire to gain long term employment in the colony. He cited the sizable expense of printing Maryland's existing Body of Laws claiming the task would create such a financial burden that "it should be thought of as too great." He proposed instead that the assembly should establish him as the printer of new laws, speeches and debates as outlined in the first two sections, and after satisfactory completion of these duties over several years he would "undertake to ease the public of that charge and content myself with running the hazard of subscriptions for it." His only stipulation here was to be allowed full exact copies of the laws delivered in time for him to expediently complete the job.²²

The proposal, which Parks duplicated a few years later in Virginia, became the blueprint for the printer's establishment in the Chesapeake. The document reveals a businessman who willingly created a proposal both favorable to Maryland's government and to himself. To Parks, the petition signified a long game, one that did not offer an immediate payoff but ensured steady employment and income for at least several years in the future. This strongly suggests Parks' desire to avoid the volatility of his past endeavors. He, by this point, was no doubt a skilled and experienced printer, but the uncertainty and expense of his English ventures had taught him the prudence of including a security clause in his business plan in this new, untested, market. The promise of

²² *Archives of Maryland, Proceedings and Acts*, Assembly Proceedings, March 15-23, 1725/6, 475-476. LeMay, *Men of Letters*, 111-112; Lawrence C. Wroth, *A History of Printing in Colonial Maryland, 1686-1776* (Baltimore: Typothetae of Baltimore, 1922) 170-171.

reasonable prices and reduced subscription rates suggest that Parks' intentions were not for quick profit but long term security as the printing press of the colonial government. Four printers had opened and closed in Maryland since the 1680s, but none of these carried the responsibility of printer to the Maryland house. An endorsement of the colony's ruling body offered extra credibility to any outside printing endeavors Parks took on and would make the house's acceptance of his offer more personally satisfactory and financially lucrative in the long term. After consideration of the upper and lower houses, the latter of which convened a special committee to examine and make special recommendations, Parks' proposal passed with a few alterations. The house set the cost of printing journals, votes, speeches and debates stipulated in part two of the proposal at twenty shillings per sheet and that "encouragement given printer continue seven years agreed to only by the lower house," indicating the reluctance of the upper house to have house proceeding printed publicly and giving them the right to challenge Parks' installment as printer during the seven-year term. For the third portion of the proposal the house agreed to let Parks furnish every house member, every county court, and every court magistrate with a "complete body of the whole laws" of Maryland at twenty-four shillings each. Governor Charles Calvert weighed in by ordering that the Body of Laws be published first, before any house proceedings and debates.²³

Parks, as Maryland's printer, was now not only tied to the English Atlantic's network of printers, but also enjoyed at least somewhat steady employment by a colony

²³ *Archives of Maryland, Proceedings and Acts*, Assembly Proceedings, March 15-23, 1725/6, 476-477.

of the crown. His first known American work of print was produced in Parks' Annapolis shop with the printer's name placed prominently on the title page. He also printed *Proceedings of the Assembly* in 1727, a process completed eight succeeding years before committing himself fully as Virginia's printer. But Parks could not expect to support his family off the proceeds of government printing alone. As with his English ventures he supplemented his income with book binding and private printing such as handbills, pamphlets, and invitations. He also acted as a book-seller and stationer, selling writing utensils, paper, religious texts, music books, and playing cards. Typical of many Atlantic printers, Parks became the local postmaster, allowing him to establish relationships with colonial "post-riders" and deliver his products, and eventually his newspapers, to a wider readership. He lived and worked in the area of Annapolis planned for craftsmen located close to the assembly building. Shops such as Parks' became centers for intellectual activity where opinion and discourse exchanged alongside material goods.²⁴

Parks continually applied his experience as a printer in England and the advantages of the colonial market to his new print shop. From the time he apprenticed in the English west country, through his experiences as an independent and partnered printer in the larger markets of Reading and London he had progressed into an entrepreneur who fully considered his market and how to exploit it in order to find financial security. In Maryland, with the printing of official documents and an endorsement by the Maryland assembly, Parks found the missing component which had eluded him in his past ventures.

²⁴ Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Vintage Books, 1958), 336-337.

Lack of viable competition also aided his efforts. Although printers had operated in Maryland before, none of them operated at such an advantageous time as Parks. A combination of ambition, business sense, and diplomacy comingled with a cautiously growing trust of the printed word in the colonies allowed Parks relative security and success in his new home. His shop reflected those he had worked in and operated in England, lacking now only one element, a newspaper.

The first edition of the *Maryland Gazette* appeared in September 1727. At the time of Parks' arrival in Annapolis there were no newspapers in the British colonies south of Philadelphia.²⁵ The other two markets were Boston and New York with the total number of papers in the 1720s totaling seven. This must have encouraged Parks who, by this time was extremely experienced at news printing. Maryland, like its neighbor Virginia, hungered for news from abroad, and although they could acquire this from Philadelphia or even New York papers, a Maryland newsweekly could offer local interest as well. In addition, less government control existed in the colonies, offering the potential for extended content in the way of editorial opinion. The paper, as with Parks' papers in the past, included "entertainments" after the English tradition, such as satires, advices, and poetry. It also, like the *Half-Penny London Journal* employed serialization of essays

²⁵ The second successful print shop south of Philadelphia was in Charleston, founded by a journeyman apprentice of Benjamin Franklin, Timothy Lewis in 1732 and operated by Lewis' widow after his death. See Edwin Wolf, "The Origins of Early American Printing Shops." *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 35, no. 3 (1978): 198-209.

and stories. The difference with Parks' earlier English papers came in the area of local interests.²⁶

At the forefront of these often controversial subjects lay the Chesapeake's most volatile commodity, tobacco. In the 1720s and 30s the Chesapeake experienced a depression in tobacco prices. Manipulation by the French of the Chesapeake tobacco market prompted strict criticism from English Atlantic tobacco merchants resulting in an essay by Maryland tobacco agent Henry Darnell entitled *A Just and Impartial Account of the Transactions of the Merchants in London for the Advancement of the Price of Tobacco...In a Letter from Him to the Inhabitants of Maryland, Dated September 18, 1728*. The essay ran in *The Maryland Gazette* in early 1729 and called for a united front by British businessmen against the unregulated trade practices of French merchants. Soon the discourse turned to criticism of the factioning English merchants themselves, and attention to competition with Virginia, all represented in pieces in Parks' paper. The printing of these opinion essays regarding the tobacco trade quickly acclimated the printer to the primary preoccupation of Chesapeake planters and officials. This education would carry over in his role in the coming years as printer to Virginia and publisher of the *Virginia Gazette*. Both newspapers provided a consistent platform to address this vital element of the local and transatlantic economy, and Parks found ways of exploiting the

²⁶ Wroth, *William Parks*, 14.

subject in standalone tracts of essays and tables for the Chesapeake print materials market.²⁷

Parks wasted little time in approaching Virginia's House of Burgesses with the same kind of proposal he fashioned for the Maryland assembly. The difference, judging from the existing documentation, is that it appears that Parks initiated the proposal to the Virginia political assembly rather than the other way around. An entry in the *Journals of the House of Burgesses* from February of 1727 outlines Parks' proposal to the house reading, "A petition and proposal of William Parks for completing a complete body of the laws of this colony now in force, and also the laws to be made hereafter from time to time was referred by the Governor and council to the consideration of the House, and was read." This proposal appeared before the Virginia legislature roughly two years after Parks' petition to the Maryland assembly, indicating the printer's ambition to extend his market to Maryland's neighboring Chesapeake colony. Since there is no record of the type of call for an official printer in the official journal of the House of Burgesses it is safe to speculate that either an agent approached Parks unofficially or Parks took the initiative to make the proposal without Virginia's recruitment. The later makes sense when regarding Parks' past endeavors of building on his experience and exploring new markets. The prospect would also hold appeal for Virginia officials, most of them tobacco planters, whose competition with Maryland in the transatlantic tobacco trade

²⁷ *A Just and Impartial Account of the Transactions of the Merchants in London for the Advancement of the Price of Tobacco...In a Letter from Him to the Inhabitants of Maryland*, Dated September 18, 1728, Maryland Gazette, September, 18, 1728.

would prompt desire to also codify and make public their laws locally, enjoying the type of information distribution that a local printer offered.²⁸ The Virginia House of Burgesses resolved in the same session, “That it will be of public use and benefit to print and publish a complete body of laws of this colony now in force.” The Council recommended that a committee convene that included the clerks of the Council and House as well as the Speaker to come to an agreement as to the price of printing and distributing the laws.

Parks represented an individual with experience in the cosmopolitan aspect of gentry who saw themselves as extensions of the English elite but also, stemming from his early years in the agricultural west country of England, as someone who could serve the sensibility of tobacco planters of the Chesapeake. Parks’ proposal does not mention opening a print shop in Williamsburg, but a journey to England in 1730 to buy printing equipment and improve his business contacts indicate that Parks saw the advantage of running two shops between two colonies. A business trip of this type contained some risk; the unsafe prospect of eighteenth-century sea travel, and the long term capital investment for the cost of the journey and the expense of buying new equipment. On the other hand, if successful, Parks could profit from a wider extension of the Chesapeake market and a new client, the House of Burgesses. Two years as an officially endorsed printer for Maryland had paved the way to his permanent home in Williamsburg.

Virginia, like Maryland, presented a market with strong social and political ties to

²⁸ Journal Entry, February 22, 1727/28, *Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1727-1734, 1736-1740*, H.R. McIlwaine, ed. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1910) 25

England. Also, like Maryland, it promised a strong readership and patronage that necessarily rooted itself in agricultural economic concerns including slavery.²⁹

Even more than issues regarding tobacco prices and Atlantic trade, notices in the back pages of Parks' Maryland and Virginia newspapers defined the distinctive local culture of the Chesapeake. Parks capitalized directly off the tobacco industry and its most heinous labor practice, slavery. The institution of slavery overshadowed the successes of Parks in the Chesapeake, and would be something unfamiliar to the printer firsthand until he arrived in the colonies. But soon Parks, like many of the prominent colonists of his time, aided in its growth and, as seen in his newspaper advertisements, promoted the sale of slaves as well as rewards for the capture of runaways. The absence of any articles or essays criticizing the institution supports the assertion that Parks ingratiated himself to a society that profited off the free labor and commercial sales and purchase of slaves. One example of this comes from an entry in the *Journal of the House of Burgesses* on the same day that Parks' proposal appeared. The entry is the introduction of a bill regarding the execution of wills "to prevent the loss to exor's (executors) and adm's (administrators) by the sale of negroes, goods and chattels taken in execution."³⁰ The regard of slaves as property, and thus a saleable commodity, symbolize the new market in which Parks now operated. It is also important to note that as the official printer of both Maryland and Virginia, Parks printed the complete laws of the colonies including the

²⁹ Parks, *William Parks*, 108.

³⁰ Journal Entry, February 22, 1727/28, *Journal of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1727-1734, 1736-1740*, H.R. McIlwaine, ed. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1910) 25

laws of 1664 and 1705 which codified and consolidated the practice of slavery. Inclusion of Parks' direct participation in the system appears early in the *Maryland Gazette* with a 1728 notice which reads, "Run away from Mr. Charles Carrell, at Annapolis, a negro man named Stephen, a cooper by trade; suspected to be at present about the fork of Patuxent. Whoever secures the said negro, so that he may be brought to his master, at Annapolis, or to Daniel Hearn at Mr. Carroll's plantation beyond Elk ridge shall over and above the allowance by acts of assembly receive 20 shillings reward." Printed notices such as these represent a large departure from the printer's early life and indicate Parks' ambitions went unchecked as he openly participated in Chesapeake slavery.

Although the Virginia assembly appeared immediately amenable to Parks' proposal, the venture came with an appreciable amount of risk. Historically, Virginia represented a colony that adopted local printing hesitantly at best and with concentrated hostility at worst.³¹ In 1661 William Berkeley wrote of education and printing, "I thank God that we have not free schools nor printing, and I hope we shall not have these for these hundred years; for learning has brought disobedience and heresy and sects into the world, and printing has divulged them and libels against the best governments. God keep us from both."³² In the 1680s Governor Thomas Culpeper issued a gag order on printer William Nuthead for attempting to print laws without the sanction of the government. Finally, printing in Virginia experienced an official ban for almost fifty years from the

³¹ For details of colonial Virginia's reluctance toward public printing see A.G. Roeber "'The Scrutiny of the Ill Nured Ignorant Vulgar': Lawyers and Print Culture in Virginia, 1716 to 1774." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 91, no. 4 (1983): 387-417.

³² Henry S. Green, "Early Newspapers in the Virginias," *Ohio Archaeological and Historical Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (1916) 190.

governorship of Francis Howard.³³ By the 1720s, however, the attitude toward the subversive prospects of printing had softened in the colony. The establishment of a college and a governor who represented a more progressive leadership, William Gooch, allowed printers like Parks to reexamine the market and assess the threat of government censorship. The increase in population influenced Gooch and his assembly to loosen government restrictions regarding free communication.³⁴ In addition, the College of William and Mary, while offering the type of “free school” that Berkeley abhorred and thus a less limited exchange of ideas, also promised a ready market for the sale of books.

Virginia might have presented another lure for Parks, a culture that mirrored his motherland three thousand miles across the Atlantic. His early childhood and apprenticeship took place in rural setting with farms and small towns populating a landscape preoccupied with animal and plant husbandry. Compared to growing metropolitan areas such as the London he experienced during his time as publisher of the *Half-Penny* and even the organized and commercially planned capital of Maryland, Virginia resembled the type of town, farm, and country environment from which parks had originated. The most significant difference between the English west country were the large plantations whose existence relied more and more on slave labor to produce profits. Like all of the individuals discussed earlier in this work, Parks turned a blind eye to the inhumanity of slavery, concentrating his ambitions towards those responsible for

³³ Parks, *William Parks*, 110.

³⁴ Jack P. Greene, “The Role of the Lower Houses of Assembly in Eighteenth-Century Politics,” in *Essays in American Colonial History*, ed. Paul Goodman (New York: Holt Rinehart, and Winston, 1967), 430, 432.

its proliferation, the planter elite. Parks probably encountered petty-aristocracy during his time in Ludlow, Worcester, and Reading (in fact he might have openly courted it as judged by his advertisements for the printing of family coats-of-arms in Reading), but Virginia planters promised a distinct type of clientele, one that considered themselves intrinsically connected to the English aristocracy. Having served consumers in London with the *Half-Penny London Journal* using a combination of quasi-intellectual essays on natural history and an array of entertainments, Parks stood to gain from a deep understanding of planter culture's anglophile tendencies and how to best serve them. In Maryland and Virginia Parks continues to oblige an English market, one with distinctively local characteristics born in the environment of the Chesapeake colonies, but never-the-less one with a strong social and economic ties to the mother country.

The timeline of his journey to England in early 1730 and his return in June of that year coincided with the July announcement in the *Maryland Gazette* referring to his new office in Williamsburg. Parks quickly devised, as in Maryland, a subscription based "Virginia Miscellany" produced at "his house, near the capital, in Williamsburg." He also made announcements in Philadelphia's *American Weekly Mercury*. This indicates that he set up in the Virginia capital shortly after he returned from England. Parks probably also printed his first Virginia publications around this time. Advertisements for the laws of the May, 1730 assembly of Virginia appeared in the *Maryland Gazette* in late 1730. The advertisement also offered a separate supplement to the May laws listing all of the laws pertaining to tobacco exclusively. Finally, the announcement offers a book of rates and tables relating to tobacco entitled *Dealer's Pocket Companion*. The probability that Parks

produced some or all of these works in Virginia lies in the advertisements' declaration that the books could be purchased at both the Annapolis and Williamsburg shops. It would not have made sense to print works so pertinent to Virginians, especially the 1730 tobacco laws, in Maryland, and insure the cost of shipping to a market where such works would be in high demand. The laws would be of some interest to Marylanders too, but it is likely that Parks chose to have his inaugural prints produced in Williamsburg and include works that directly concerned the Virginia tobacco market.³⁵

Though little evidence of the daily operation and expenses of Parks' operations have turned up, a contemporary account regarding the business of Benjamin Franklin, at that time a young printer in Philadelphia, allows a glimpse into the myriad of items offered in the print shop in the capital of an American colony. A shop book kept by his wife Deborah itemized inventory describing sales over a period between 1735-1739. The document listed "the sale of all kinds of printed forms and writing materials—bonds, bills of lading, servants' indentures, powers of attorney, bills of sale, paper by the ream or quire, blank books, ink, pencils, quills, slates, lampblack, sealing-wax, parchment, wafers, pasteboard." As well as writing paraphernalia Franklin's shop sold books in the form of primers, bibles, psalters, dictionaries, and grammars, and Franklin's own published works including *Cato's Moral Distichs* and his best-seller *Poor Richard's Almanac* which sold 3000 copies in 1738. The shop sold other merchandise less directly related to the printing culture offering "much chocolate, some cloth, clothing, and even

³⁵ Wroth, *William Parks*, 15.

spectacles, while the Proprietor Thomas Penn bought and charged a cake of the family's famous crown soap.”³⁶ The passage reveals a diversity of merchandise and a clientele in need of a wide assortment of necessary and luxury items mostly for the purpose of print-related activity but also for the general enhancement of life. Parks' shop, at least in his early years, may not have offered quite as much stock, but it would have provided most of the printing needs listed above to serve a growing literate clientele.

The passage also turns attention to his customers who he claimed “were as varied as the goods they bought.” Franklin's friends from his social improvement club the Junto gathered in the shop as well as “local political and merchant grandees.” Out-of-towners made the shop one of their destinations as Franklin lists visitors from “Burlington, Trenton, Bristol, Salem, New Castle, and Lewes.”³⁷ The managers carefully recorded all of the transactions so that “it seems nothing was unaccounted for,” leaving the impression that strict management of accounts allowed for continued success. A bill to the Proprietor of the Pennsylvania colony, Thomas Penn, underscores both the attention to bookkeeping and the advantage of serving the colonial government. The bill, dated from May 18-October 20, 1734 lists items such as printed warrants and court cases, book binding, sermons, bonds, advertisements in the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, subscriptions to the *Gazettes*, a bird book, and a book of constitutions all totaling £14 7s. 1d.³⁸ Although Franklin's operation existed in a more vibrant and established urban environment, Parks'

³⁶ Shop-Book, 1735-39, MS Account Book: American Philosophical Society in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. 2, January 1735-December 1744* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960) 127.

³⁷ Shop-Book, 128.

³⁸ Bill to Thomas Penn, AD: American Philosophical Society in *Papers of Benjamin Franklin, Vol. 1 January 1706-1734* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960) 371.

shop would have the potential to serve officials, planters, and merchants in the same capacity.

The establishment of the Virginia print shop solidified Parks status as a transatlantic entrepreneur. Although there are no concrete details of how Parks came to the Chesapeake, when he did arrive the printer inarguable displayed considerable attention and energy regarding the opportunities that stretched before him. Maryland acted as a new apprenticeship for acquiring knowledge about the colonial Chesapeake market and primed Parks for working in the slave-based culture of Virginia's planter elite. Nothing reflects this attention to the desires and anxieties of his market more than the *Virginia Gazette*.

The variety of items published in the *Virginia Gazette* allows for an understanding of Parks' readership in 1730s Virginia. In many ways the *Gazette* resembled Parks' earlier newspapers, especially the *Maryland Gazette*. The publisher again attempted to attract a wide readership with stories from an assortment of locations and sources. News from abroad, advices, verse, and light political commentary populated its pages. The paper, published three times a week, frequently included on its front page a satire (often aimed at the French), or essay extolling the merits of English virtue, a message that would not be lost on Virginia's anglophile readership. The second and third pages included dispatches from foreign cities describing tensions, diplomatic missions, natural disasters, and human interest stories. Organized chronologically rather than thematically, the items relayed a somewhat random compilation of events in each issue. A dispatch from Venice

describing tensions in Constantinople might be followed by a piece about a young boy who gave up two guineas so his grandfather could replace a stolen cow. Another report might announce the marriage of prominent Freemason in England followed by a report of the popularity of Irish linens and Ireland's total annual revenue from linen exports to England. News came also from neighboring colonies such as an announcement in the first issue of the *Gazette* stating: "The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, have received advice by a letter from South Carolina of the death of the Rev. Mr. John Fulerton. Missionary at Christ Church: he died much lamented not only by his parishners, but by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance." Reports of violent or scandalous crimes also filled the pages such as the story of a Bristol wife murdered in her home by blunt-force-trauma to the head and robbed of £80. The announcement reported that she was "a person that bore a good character, was very industrious in her business, and is very much lamented by her neighbors."³⁹ These stories all reflect the varying interests of Parks' readership and his desire to fulfill them. The printer required an experienced understanding of transatlantic consumer and intellectual needs. These needs often resided in a strong identification with the British empire and its foreign and colonial entanglements. A story relaying English military concerns in the Mediterranean could reinforce a Virginian's connection to the larger concept of empire; a story about a London foreman losing his life on a church building project could provoke empathy in a Williamsburg reader who understood the dangers of colonial era construction; a satire concerning a maiden's thwarting of several suitors could provide entertainment but also

³⁹ *The Virginia Gazette*, September 10, 1736.

reinforce patriarchal gender roles for Parks' readership. Parks exploited these sensibilities and found sustained readership for the *Virginia Gazette* that lasted until his death.

In the October 8, 1736 issue of the *Virginia Gazette* this notice appeared under the heading of "Advertisement, concerning Advertisements."

All persons who have occasion to buy or sell houses, lands, goods, or cattle; or have servants or slaves runaway; or have lost horses, cattle &c. or want to give any public notice; may have it advertised in all three Gazettes printed in one week, for three shillings, and for two shillings per week for as many weeks afterwards as they shall order, by giving or sending their directions to the printer hereof.

And, as these papers will circulate (as speedily as possible) not only all over this, but also neighboring colonies, and will probably be read by some thousands of people, it is very likely they may have the desired effect; and it is certainly the cheapest and most effectual method that can be taken, for publishing anything of this nature.⁴⁰

This short two paragraph advertisement captured the possibilities of newsprint as a way to widely distribute business concerns of ordinary colonists. The notice reveals the economic priorities of colonists, many of whom could afford now to print the details of goods and land for sale to reach a transcolonial readership. It also indicates the institution of widely distributed public notices regarding runaway slaves and servants, an element that underscores Virginia's increasing commitment as a slave-society. The advertising section of the *Gazette* lists runaway servants and slaves usually before or after missing livestock, denoting their status as possessions and investments and emphasizing the importance of their capture and return in strictly fiduciary terms. Overall the notices

⁴⁰ *The Virginia Gazette*, October 8, 1736.

provide a glimpse into the economic and social worlds of the colony in the 1730s. Parks' *Gazette* announces its aims not only as a courier of news from home and abroad, but also, and possibly more significantly, a mouthpiece for the day-to-day economic interests of planter-slave society to be distributed to neighboring colonies.

Analysis of the *Gazette*'s advertisements lends insight toward understanding the world of intercolonial commerce. The advertisements, presented on the fourth page of each issue highlight the immediate concerns of colonists regarding slaves, indentured servants, land, livestock, available printed works, shipping news, and other miscellany. As a whole the ads indicate a connection of commercial networks through the employment of regularly printed notices that relayed important local trade concerns to a wider audience. It also reinforced slave society by providing a consistent means to communicate the details of runaway slaves and promote commercial transactions based on their capture and return. In this way, arguably more than any other aspect of the *Virginia Gazette*, the advertisement section helped to transform the broadcast and reception of commercial information in the colony and proliferated the tendency toward further entrepreneurial projects, while reinforcing the institutions of slave-society, into the eighteenth century.⁴¹

The most glaring anomaly to modern commercial sensibilities in the *Gazette*'s advertising section are the dozens of announcements describing the physical features and

⁴¹ For an analysis of runaway notices as a tool in the subjugation of African American identity by a concentrated effort on the part of white colonial authority see Mary J. Gallant, "Slave Runaways in Colonial Virginia: Accounts and Status Passage as Collective Process." *Symbolic Interaction* 15, no. 4 (1992): 389-412.

rewards for runaway slaves and indentured servants. Nearly every issue included announcements of this type. A December 17 notice states, “Ran away from the subscriber, on King’s Creek, on Wednesday, the 8th of this month, at night, two negro men: One named Cuffee, is a well set fellow, of middle stature, with a full face, thick lips, and a bold countenance. The other named Essex, is a tall slender fellow, and of a discontented countenance.” The notice went on to describe the men’s dress, the boat they escaped in, and a promise from the notice’s author Nathaniel Bacon Burwell that “whoever brings the said negroes to my house shall have ample satisfaction from me.”⁴² A notice from 1745 gave equal description to the details of a runaway slave, reading, “ran away, about the tenth of April last, from the honorable John Custis, Esq., of Williamsburg, a negro man named Peter, of a middle stature, about 30 years of age, has a scar in his forehead, or somewhere about the upper part of his face,, occasioned by falling into a fire when a child, is Virginia born, went away with irons on his legs.”⁴³ Both slaves and servants constituted a considerable investment for their owners, justifying the cost of advertising and rewards to better insure the return of runaways. A white servant named Samuel Tomlinson ran away in October 1736 and was described as “a convict; of a pale complexion with a downcast roguish look: has the mark of an old sore, under his right jaw, and two letters made with powder, on his right hand, thus: S.T.” The notice also promised a fair reward in addition to “the allowance of law,” by the servant’s owner Thomas William Irwin.⁴⁴ Another announcement describing two runaway servants, one

⁴² *The Virginia Gazette*, December 17, 1736.

⁴³ *The Virginia Gazette*, May 9, 1745.

⁴⁴ *The Virginia Gazette*, November 19, 1736.

of which had a tattoo bearing the name “Mary Roberts,” states “They are bold stout fellows, and will make resistance, and if taken, must be well guarded, or they will escape.”⁴⁵ The ads’ attention to descriptive detail conveyed the hope that a reader might recognize, capture, and return the runaway, thus aiding in (or correcting) the commercial objectives of planter servitude and slavery.⁴⁶

The sale of land, another primary concern for colonial Virginia, received an equal measure of attention in the advertisement section of the *Gazette*. For prospectors looking to expand their land-holdings, or wishing to sell off land, the section offered considerable space for real-estate descriptions. An advertisement for land in 1737 promised “Four thousand acres of land, twelve miles from Warwick, up James River, with buildings thereon, of the value of sixty pounds, to be sold for three hundred pounds, by colonel Samuel Cobb, of Amelia County, or the printer of this paper.”⁴⁷ The announcement reveals Parks as a broker or middleman in land transactions, another of his duties as the colony’s printer. These notices reveal the importance of location in the purchase of land. The descriptions included proximity to towns, water passage, and courthouses such as in this announcement by John Lyde in September, 1738. “A plantation belonging to the subscriber, situated in Charles City County, about five miles from the lower church, 6 miles from the court house, and 3 miles from Chickahominy River, containing 350 acres of land, with a dwelling house, and several convenient outhouses, in good repair, two

⁴⁵ *The Virginia Gazette*, November 17, 1738.

⁴⁶ For insight into the meaning of runaway notices to the colonists that read and wrote them see Jonathan Prude, “To Look upon the Lower Sort:” Runaway Ads and the Appearance of Unfree Laborers in America, 1750-1800.” *The Journal of American History* 78, no. 1 (1991): 124-59.

⁴⁷ *The Virginia Gazette*, July 8, 1737.

good orchards; and the plantation in good order, any person inclinable to purchase, may agree on the terms, by applying to me at the said plantation.”⁴⁸ Announcements such as these reflect the projects of land-improvement and settlement west of the capital of Williamsburg and, combined with the runaway slave notices, give direct evidence of the primary concerns of colonists in the agrarian colony—land and labor.⁴⁹

Shipping also held a high priority for exporters into transatlantic trade networks, reflected in the advertising section of the *Gazette*. Usually these notices ran in late spring when heavy traffic in and out of the Chesapeake necessitated a listing of a ship’s name, captain, and inventory of cargo. Divided into two segments consisting of incoming and outgoing shipping the listings allowed prospective clients to review merchandise before seeing it in person. The announcement for June 1, 1739 detailed four ships entering the York River all of which carried sizable cargo, mostly sugar and rum. The third listed, a cross-galley that sailed from Bristol to Africa and contained “266 slaves, and sundry returned goods.” The ship appears again in the first advertisement of the issue stating, “The cross-galley, Captain Joseph Pitman, lately arrived with a choice cargo of slaves. The sale whereof will begin on Monday the 4th instant, at West-Point.” The advertisement goes on to offer freight passage on the ship for tobacco for the return trip to England. This is another example of how Parks’ newspaper represented the interests of slave labor and the transatlantic slave trade. The outgoing list also provides understanding of other

⁴⁸ *The Virginia Gazette*, September 29, 1738.

⁴⁹ Probably the most respected and authoritative study of land and labor concerns in colonial Virginia is Edmund S. Morgan’s *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975).

types of commercial products leaving the colony such as iron, beaver, raccoon, and deer pelts.⁵⁰

Advertisements for a burgeoning Virginia print-culture coincided with runaway slave-notices, land ventures, and shipping-news. Parks augmented his income with print material available at his shop. For this he employed the free advertising his newspaper offered, and he provided lists of works with descriptions of binding, paper, and content. These notices provide a bounty of examples of what the reading public in Virginia expected from their printer. A 1738 ad for one of Parks' printed works provides an example of the military interests of colonists. "The Manual Exercise: containing the several words of command, and motions, now made use of in military exercise. Very proper for the use of all persons in the militia, to instruct or remind them in their discipline. Printed and sold by Parks, in Williamsburg." The announcement of this volume would receive attention from colonists whose defense relied on local county militias whose drills and exercises occurred periodically throughout the year. Another advertisement in the same issue offered, "an Essay on the Pleurisy: Wherin the cause of that disease is plainly accounted for, from the circumstance of this climate, a remedy almost absolutely certain is prescribed which is founded on experience, and is a vegetable that grows plentiful in many places of this country." The next ad is for a book of poems "never before printed. By a gentleman of Virginia." The final work on the list is possibly

⁵⁰ *The Virginia Gazette*, June 1, 1739.

the most compelling in terms of how colonists viewed their environment and that of their neighboring colonies. Park described it as:

A Large Map of North Carolina: being not only an exact plan of the land, small rivers, creeks &c. but also the sea-coast, and navigable rivers, describing the several inlets, with their several soundings, shoals, anchorage, marks &c. Very useful to navigators: and it is a very large map (being five feet long, and four feet broad, on two sheets of elephant paper) it's not only useful but ornamental to gentlemen's halls, parlors, or staircases. By Edward Moseley⁵¹

All of the works on this short list demonstrate the diversity of subjects in Parks' printed works and a changing regard for locally printed material in the colony. Much like the content of his newspaper, the works offered in his shop reflect needs and desires particular to an eighteenth century Virginia colonist. Military and health concerns addressing internal and external threats combined with the work of local poets reflecting on Virginia environment and identity. A map could offer the practical use of aiding in navigation of the North Carolina coastline or the aesthetic function of adorning a hall or a staircase. The notices listing Parks' printed offerings also emphasize the growing culture-of-print that a shop like his provided. Patrons were no longer required to receive books from England or northern colonial cities. Although Parks' shop would not allow for as large a selection as a London bookseller. He still attempted to lure buyers by advertising works that mirrored their image as Virginians as well as English subjects. As the militia handbook tied the colonist to an imperial project, the work on pleurisy could give

⁵¹ This map is probably a print of Moseley's 1733 "New and Correct Map of the Province of North Carolina" see East Carolina Digital Collections <https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/1028>.

comfort for an ailment that was a threat to the lives of colonists. Parks himself died of pleurisy in 1750.

Although all of the content of Parks' *Virginia Gazette* is useful in understanding the relationship between publisher and audience, the advertisements offer an extra element in understanding commercial practices in eighteenth-century Virginia. They also illuminate Parks' role not only as an entrepreneur in his own right but as a promoter of entrepreneurial activity for his fellow colonists. The ads served to bring in steady income beyond subscriptions while providing a means to announcing the wares of Parks' print shop. The wide distribution of the newspaper (subscriptions ran to neighboring North Carolina and beyond) allowed the strengthening of intercolonial commercial relationships aided by a steady flow of printed materials. These relationships, as always in colonial Virginia, not only reinforced inter and trans-colonial exchange of merchandise and ideas, but helped to consolidate the attitude of acceptance and even promotion of slavery in the colony. *The Virginia Gazette*, Parks' most successful entrepreneurial venture, represents the normative role newspapers served in their community in the eighteenth century, making readily available *belle lettres*, business news, satire, and advertising to colonists and legitimizing the institutions they created in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Parks died April 1, 1750 aboard the merchant ship *Nelson* sailing from Gravesend to Plymouth in preparation for its transatlantic voyage to Virginia. Parks must have understood the gravity of his illness—he was attended by a Virginia doctor Thomas Smith—so that in the final stages of his decline he dictated a will that included provisions

for his daughter and surviving siblings. His last wished also contained business wishes including directions to his wife and son-in-law to complete the new editions of the Virginia Laws. The *Nelson* reached the York River in late May. Word of Parks' death arrived at his print shop in Williamsburg soon after and, it is likely his foreman, William Hunter, wrote the obituary for the *Virginia Gazette*. The same obituary appeared in Parks' former newspaper the *Maryland Gazette*, and eventually, in mid-July, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* published the same notice, indicating an interest by one of the newspaper's owners, Benjamin Franklin, and equally ambitious printer who conducted numerous business transactions with Parks' during his career.⁵²

In May 1750 the *Maryland Gazette* published this obituary, originally printed in the *Virginia Gazette*:

Since the last *Gazette*, arrived in York River, the *Hatley*, Capt. *Hill*, and the *Nelson*, Capt. *Watson*, both from *London*, by whom we have the account of the death of Mr. William Parks, late printer of this paper: He took his passage in Capt. *Watson*, and went on board the 22nd of March; in good health, but was soon seized with pleurisy, of which he died the 1st of April, and was buried in Gosport. His character was so generally known, and esteemed by all who had any acquaintance with him, that it would be vain to aim at it. He was [illegible] in his carrying on the public business; as printer to this colony, and gave general content: so that his death may be esteemed a public as well as private loss.⁵³

This notice marked the end of the life and career of William Parks, Virginia's first successful and officially endorsed printer. Parks' experience as a printer in both England and the Chesapeake saw him through the apprenticeship system and several print related

⁵² Parks, *William Parks*, 1-3.

⁵³ *The Maryland Gazette*, May 24, 1750.

business ventures. His path from a small agricultural community in the west of England to the commercial markets of Reading and London prepared him for subsequent success as the government printer in Maryland and Virginia. Parks arrived at his capability through a series of trials and failures in his native country, eventually discovering a more amenable market in the american colonies. In England he learned primarily to adapt to the commercial conditions of his environments and the reading desires of his audience. This did not bring him sustained success until he applied his experience to the distinct environment of Chesapeake culture. The endorsement of both the Maryland and the Virginia assemblies ensured Parks' entrepreneurial aims, and he quickly adjusted to a reading public with strong ties to English culture and politics but with equally pressing local interests resting on tobacco cultivation and the institution which supported it, slavery. With his newspapers, especially *The Virginia Gazette*, a sustained weekly periodical that reinforced the commercial aspects of Chesapeake planter culture, he created a normative format for the entrenchment of colonial institutions, something colonies south of Philadelphia had never experienced before.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In 1724 Reverend Hugh Jones published his book *The Present State of Virginia*. In his Introduction he wrote “this country is altered wonderfully, and far more advanced and improved in all respects of late years, since the beginning of Colonel Spotswood’s lieutenancy, than in the whole century before his government, which he may be esteemed to have discharged with a commendable, just, and prudent administration, glorious for himself, and advantageous both for the crown and the plantation.” He went on to assert, “The scales of justice are now fixed there upon their true balance and the course of trade is nearly confined to the right channel.” Nearly four decades after Lord Effingham’s and Lionel Wafer’s struggles with the loose affiliates of legitimate and illegitimate trade networks of the Chesapeake, Jones confirmed a stabilized economic culture. Rhys Isaac reinforced these claims by identifying, like Jones, a distinct way of life based on an ordered hierarchy demonstrated in the organization of settlements and plantations. By Jones’ time these claimed, anglicized, spaces fully incorporated parish churches as well as courthouses as physical assertions of social cohesion.¹

¹ Hugh Jones, Richard L. Morton, ed., *The Present state of Virginia;: From whence is inferred a short view of Maryland and North Carolina* (Charlottesville: Published for the University of Virginia, 1956) 7-9. Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1982) 16. See also Kathleen M. Brown, *Good Wives, Nasty Wenches, and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996). Jones, *The Present State*, 76.77.

Jones' telling Virginia found its cultural and economic footing in the second and third decade of the eighteenth century. He asserted that geography allowed Virginia a particular advantage to establish successful commercial systems: direct proximity to the sea and a large navigable bay, broad waterways that provided easy transport inland, soil for planting commercial crops, and timber for inland and maritime construction. He also commended the colony's leaders for their ability to exploit these resources to the advantage of settlers crediting Virginia's elite with devising a complex system of stability and prosperity, much more so than his fellow author, Robert Beverley, whose final printing of his own *History and Present State of Virginia* appeared two years earlier. Jones detailed the lives of slaves in Virginia, unintentionally underscoring the intrinsic relationship between the colony's stability and slave labor. He described the daily occupations of slaves in an agricultural setting, but also included trades learned by slaves such as sawyer, carpenter, smith, and cooper. The Anglican minister reinforced a racialized hierarchy of labor and power by saying, "they are by nature cut out for hard labor and fatigue." In doing so Jones, while tracing Virginia's transition to a viable established colony simultaneously reaffirmed its race based, slave-dependent, roots.¹ Edmund Morgan confirms this historical assessment by attributing the rise of a conscious sense of liberty in the American colonies, which equated economic liberty for people like Beverley, Byrd, and Parks, to a parallel rise in slavery in planter-centered regions such as Virginia. From 1660 on Virginia legislated its way to slavery. By 1750, due to natural increase and continued importation of slaves, the slave population numbered over

¹ Isaac, *Transformation*, 16.

100,000, up ten times since the beginning of the century.² Anthony Parent asserts that as Virginia's elite continued to become beholden to the authority of the crown and the English mercantile system they also solidified their distinct cultural identity. Entrepreneurial activity helped construct the institutional infrastructure that supported this identity, one that was based on and old order of paternalistic hierarchy with the new added condition of slave labor.³

Jack P. Greene describes early eighteenth-century Virginia society as complex but stable, a culture that had acquired an "air of permanence" after its footing in the previous century. Greene emphasizes the continued emulsification of society and economy in Virginia in contrast to its New England counterparts whose simple puritan beginnings gave way to the pervasive networks of Atlantic commerce, causing a schism in social cohesion. Virginia, who from its earliest days was viewed primarily (but not exclusively) as a commercial prospect had, through many ups and downs, seen that aim reach its intended conclusion by the beginning of the eighteenth century. Greene concedes that in the late seventeenth century Virginia's social and economic fabric still exhibited an "improvisation character." Greene confirms the assertion that by the generations of Spotswood and Parks Chesapeake culture had formed a foundation of elite social order that continued to build through the eighteenth century, buoyed up by the combination of tobacco cultivation and the ever increasing use of slaves. Greene describes the colonial

² Edmond S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975) 301.

³ Anthony Parent, *Foul Means: The Formation of a Slave Society in Virginia, 1660-1740* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003) 16.

Chesapeake during this period, using what he calls the developmental model when Virginians were becoming more “settled, cohesive, and coherent,” explaining that the simplified society of the first two generations made way for a “social elaboration,” leading to a more collective economic culture that attempted to mirror Great Britain’s metropolitan society.⁴

April Hatfield augments this image by identifying characteristics of seventeenth-century Chesapeake life that adapted to the eighteenth century, especially in economic terms. Family ties still mattered as much in the eighteenth century as the seventeenth. These ties worked to galvanize seventeenth century networks while establishing new ones that were increasingly connected to the African slave trade. Eighteenth century authors continued the tradition of their seventeenth century counterparts, such as Lionel Wafer, by promoting the colony through vivid anglicized portraits of the environmental potential of the British realm. The introduction of newspapers to population centers at the end of the seventeenth century allowed for domestic cultural production that solidified a sense of place in the colonies while simultaneously binding colonists to transatlantic Anglican socioeconomics.⁵ In Virginia tobacco still dominated the lives of most of the colony’s residents, but around the production and exportation of the commodity arose an economic infrastructure that acted as a capillary system of support and an economic hedge against the volatility of tobacco

⁴ Jack P. Greene, *Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988) 85-87.

⁵ April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007) 227.

agriculture. Alan Kulikoff argues that a need for alternate means of sustainable living prompted colonists to diversify their crops as well as their occupations, and the finite nature of tobacco planting also motivated early eighteenth century settlers to migrate west and populate the Piedmont frontier.⁶ The growth of Virginia slave society occurred alongside these adaptations.

By necessity planters required their commercial exploits to adapt to the demands of the colonial environment and follow the economic trajectory of Britain's empire. This entailed activity that by today's standards would qualify as extremely entrepreneurial. Emory G. Evans traces the importance of the elite in this period of colonial history. He asserts that the most successful planters of "the twenty-one families" attached themselves to the mercantile system by participating in activity such as exporting and importing, milling, shipbuilding, trapping, transport, small-scale manufacturing, renting of land and property, and consignment businesses. Families such as William Byrd's and the Tayloes of northern Virginia shaped the economic landscape through these activities, buoying up local commerce and importing goods and labor in the form of indentured servants and slaves in order to profit from the needs of the region. Meanwhile the growth of British influence in the Atlantic offered transatlantic business opportunities that entailed risk and return elements associated with large-scale entrepreneurial activity.⁷

⁶ Allan Kulikoff, "The Colonial Chesapeake: Seedbed of Antebellum Southern Culture?" *The Journal of Southern History* 45, no. 4 (1979): 528; "The Economic Growth of the Eighteenth-Century Colonies." *The Journal of Economic History* 39, no. 1 (1979): 275-288.

⁷ Emory G. Evans, *A Topping People: The Rise and Decline of Virginia's Old Political Elite, 1680-1790* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009) 13-14. Laura Croghan Kamoie, *Irons in the Fire: The*

Elite planters were not the only participants in Virginia's entrepreneurial culture. As this study shows, a range of individuals from divergent backgrounds and with different economic experience and motivations operated within the realm of Anglican Virginia. The array of business practices that these men and individuals like them demonstrated reveal more vividly the complex transformation occurring in the colony in the early eighteenth century. Of the five subjects of this study Lionel Wafer perhaps represents the individual who least resembles someone directly influenced by the emerging slave-planter culture, although he was captured on the Chesapeake in the presence of a slave and jailed in Jamestown while planter-officials and the Lords of Trade deliberated his case. Wafer is instructive because he allows for an evaluation of seventeenth-century norms, revealing a loose, maritime-dependent, society that enabled men like Wafer to form unsanctioned syndicates that operated outside the commercial and legal authority of the crown.

Contrasting with Lionel Wafer's loosely affiliated nautical activity in the Chesapeake the planter William Byrd employed the networks of access afforded to him through family connections, social status, and wealth to build his businesses. Byrd's occupation as an Indian trader and tobacco planter allowed him to wield influence that earned him lucrative positions as a colonial official. He navigated Bacon's Rebellion particularly well, surviving repercussions from the crown's investigation and ingratiating himself within the culture of governors and burgesses of Virginia's administrative

Business History of the Tayloe Family in Virginia's Gentry, 1700-1860 (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2007) 4-5.

authority. He did this while promoting and trading slaves. Slaves provided the twofold advantage of supplying cheap labor for the myriad of enterprises Byrd undertook and being a profitable marketable commodity in-and-of themselves. As Byrd reinforced the slave-planter community in the Chesapeake he also worked on the frontier to protect and grow his Indian trading business aided, in his later career, by the advantage of being able to monitor and regulate that trade to his advantage from his position as Burgess and auditor General. As a dominant member of Virginia's elite class Byrd set the model of planter, colonial official, and slaveowner for the generation to come, personified by his more famous son. Byrd also built on connections that tied Virginia more firmly to Britain through transatlantic channels that rewarded entrepreneurial activity. His steady correspondence and transactions with London business firms reinforced commercial and social relationships with the centers of Anglican cultural influence. His entrepreneurial activity, worked toward establishing the economic viability of Virginia to his English counterparts, indicating that the colony could work as both market and supplier to Britain's developing empire.

If William Byrd's activity indirectly shored up confidence in the colony's commercial potential, Robert Beverley's writing worked to directly promote the colony as a business venture. As a planter like Byrd, Beverley was in the advantageous position of familiarity with the colony's network of elite business practitioners, surveyors, and planters. But through his falling out with the colonial authority he had to use a more unconventional means with which to gain notoriety and profit. He thus tapped into the transatlantic world of knowledge production, following a tradition begun in the late

sixteenth century of encouraging commercial interest in Virginia through the anglicized lens of descriptive prose. His *History of the Present State of Virginia* acted as a highly biased business prospectus aimed at settlers and investors, detailing in exaggerated language the merits of the physical environment, the romanticized and outdated role of Indians, all while underplaying the presence of slavery in Virginia. In doing so Beverley himself fell into the category of entrepreneur. As an author he navigated the commercial world of books, producing his own innovations to a traditional mode of knowledge production. Simultaneously he reinvigorated entrepreneurial activity through his descriptions, painting a landscape that, through his eyes, promised innumerable opportunities to exploit the region's natural resources. On his return to Virginia he put his entrepreneurial spirit to work creating a vineyard, although he never regained his former influence in the colony's administration.

Alexander Spotswood operated as the colony's leading administrator for twelve years while understanding that Virginia's growth within the empire depended increasingly on settling the frontier for farms and business ventures. He was not necessarily new in this pursuit as governors before him energetically promoted commercial activity in Virginia, but with the heavy allocation of Chesapeake lands to wealthy planters, the backcountry that Robert Beverley detailed in his *History* became the new territory for entrepreneurial potential. Spotswood's experience as a quarter-master general in the Duke of Marlborough's European army afforded him the skills to administer a colony whose commercial and immigration activity became increasingly more complex. Spotswood encouraged this complexity by recognizing the potential for

land grants west of the Chesapeake and into the Shenandoah Valley. According to Hugh Jones, Spotswood successfully directed the channels of commerce to their true course.⁸ This may be an exaggeration, but the combination of official aims as directed by the crown through Spotswood, and his own personal objectives such as carving out a territorial niche in what is now Spotsylvania County, worked to emulsify Virginia's economy within the trans-colonial and imperial web of influence. Spotswood, a product of Britain's imperial expansion, conceivably stands as an example of Virginia's transition into the eighteenth century, traversing (at times not so successfully) the nuanced political and commercial world of planter-Burgesses and the Lords of Trade and Plantations.

William Parks then demonstrates the other end of Virginia's trajectory from a nautical based coastal culture to an established commercial region in its own right. Parks' *Virginia Gazette* reinforced Virginia's cultural institutions by allowing an anglicized reproduction of English subscription-based periodicals. The *Gazette* also catered to Virginia's distinct commercial environment, allowing access to information particular to tobacco planter culture, specifically information about the sale and capture of slaves. Virginia's colonial administration endorsed his efforts, allowing him rights as the colony's official printer, once again underscoring the importance of political support for successful business ventures. Another significant aspect of Parks' story is that he, like Spotswood, was a product of England's expanding influence in Atlantic culture. His apprenticeship in England's publishing and printing worlds put him also in league with

⁸ Jones, *The Present State*, 9.

Beverley, and his established newsweekly, which lasted, under different editorships, through the Revolution would continue to update the political and commercial environment of the colony. As April Lee Hatfield acknowledges, the establishment of colonial newspapers helped reinforce inter-colonial and transatlantic means of communication but it also in many ways eliminated informal means of communication on these routes that had been a part of the seventeenth century.⁹

In 1757, when Virginia piedmont planter and businessman Peter Jefferson died, his probate inventory listed 60 slaves. Jefferson was the second largest slave-owner in Albemarle County. His slaves represented by far his largest investment, 76% of his estate's total value with an aggregate worth of £2,399. His slaves mainly worked on his extensive land holdings on the Rivanna and Fluvanna Rivers, although a smaller percentage were domestic workers at his home, Shadwell. Jefferson kept his slaves in conditions that adhered to the acceptable norms of the day, to provide shelter, food, and clothing. His slaves allowed him considerable success as a frontier planter, not in small part because of the minimal investment required to support them as a labor force. As Susan Kerns acknowledges, the Jefferson's outlay for tools, clothing, and clothing repair for their slaves was considerable in comparison to other farmers, but the return on these expenses were equally considerable in increased production. The attention Jefferson allotted to considering the condition of his slaves indicate an entrepreneurial approach. Jefferson's treatment of his slaves was not a decision based on compassion, it was based

⁹ Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia*, 227.

on business. Jefferson had the means and capital to conduct preventative maintenance in regard to his slaves. In doing so he increased his profit.¹⁰

Jefferson personified the continuum of business practitioners in Virginia in the eighteenth century. He commanded the two most powerful tools for commercial (and political) success in the colony, land and labor. These two commodities generated new markets in the former wilderness that led to subsets of business activities centered around and heavily influenced by the plantation. The local economies depended on the success of the planters. Jefferson not only oversaw the agricultural aspects of his holdings, he also acted as a landlord, encouraging settlement and reaping a profit off rent. He operated a mill on his property, from which he would collect rent from area farmers who used it. He leased out his property, such as an ordinary, so smaller businessmen like Richard Murray could collect tolls and sell food, drink, and lodging to travelers on their way to the nearby courthouse. The plantation and its adjoining businesses demanded specialized employment. Jefferson's mill employed a miller. Coopers provided storage for milled grain, drovers hauled the goods to and from the plantation. To ease these processes planters like Jefferson would invest in infrastructure such as mills, wharves, and roads. This infrastructure supported a growing culture along the inland ports of Virginia's navigable rivers. In addition to adding the physical framework of commerce, as Kerns demonstrates, a successful planter could attract a variety of professions to a region, such as joiners, tailors, and teachers.

¹⁰ Susan Kerns, *The Jeffersons at Shadwell* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010) 119.

These characteristics of a self-supporting commercial culture came to define the economic life of many parts of inland Virginia in the eighteenth century. The stage set by Byrd and Beverley, reinforced by the work of Spotswood and Parks, became filled with small business centered around the slave-planter culture. Simultaneously the planter became romanticized as the roots of paternalism grew deeper. The role economic genitor came to inform the cultural identity of the Virginia elite. A planter could encourage the livelihood of smaller entrepreneurs by setting the example of someone who took advantage of diverse commercial opportunities while concurrently playing a role in the continued success of the business environment in an official capacity in Williamsburg. The planter could also secure this economic culture further by passing on the entrepreneurial-planter mentality to his sons, which Peter most likely did with his son Thomas.

Focus on the business lives of the five men presented in this study allows emphasis on social and economic change, both in Virginia, and in the British Empire. All five of them acted in the interest of their own livelihoods. At the same time all of them, in varying degrees, participated in the spread of Britain's economic influence, both in the colony and in the Atlantic network of exchange. This is important not because these men were particularly distinct in their actions and occupations, but because each represent a connection to a larger population of entrepreneurs and opportunists that permeated Virginia, North America, and the British Empire as it asserted its influence over the globe. The exploitative process of empire did not happen so much as a single design emanating from a centralized authority or capital, but, as these men reveal, it happened in

a tangle of personal, political, and economic motives that formed a seemingly endless array of scenarios, opportunities, conflicts, fortunes, failures, and tragedies. Lionel Wafer, William Byrd, Robert Beverley, Alexander Spotswood, and William Parks are all indicative of this era, but they also invite more study, especially in the area of non-elite business and trade, in the British colonies. They are only a fragment of a wider economic portrait of commercial life in the eighteenth century, but should be viewed as an introduction to the complexity of the fluctuating assertion of empire. Especially in the Atlantic World, between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

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